

RICHARD KING KIMBALL

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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(1911 -)

Kingie Kimball, as he is best known, describes his early childhood at the Haleiwa Hotel, then managed by his parents, Clifford and Juliet, prior to their leasing and eventual ownership of Halekulani. He tells of his parents' friendship with Walter Dillingham, the family's move to Honolulu, the expansion of Halekulani and the role his father played in the early development of Waikiki.

Mr. Kimball recalls his years at Halekulani, and shares many anecdotes regarding the growth of the tourism industry, particularly during the period following World War II.

Community, professional and political interests are recounted by Mr. Kimball, including his active participation with the Parks Board and the Pacific Area Travel Association.

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2051 Young Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

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INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD KING KIMBALL

At the Watumull Foundation, 2051 Young Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

August 13, 1986

K: Kingie Kimball

S: Alice Sinesky

K: My name is Richard King Kimball and I was born at the Haleiwa Hotel on this island on February 4, 1911. My father was managing Haleiwa Hotel for the railroad company at that time. We moved to Halekulani in 1917 when I was six years old. My dad took over the lease on the old Lewers property which had been operated as a hotel for the previous ten years as the Hau Tree Hotel.

Mother and Dad didn't like the name Hau Tree Hotel. Mother wanted to use the old Lewers family name for that property--Halekulani. She and Dad decided to change the name back to the old Lewers family name--Halekulani. That's how it got its present name. Way back in the old days, the Hawaiians asked the Lewers to use that name. The Lewers were so nice and were so nice to the people in Hawaii--they were so gracious--that they called it Halekulani.

S: And it became a worldwide landmark with that name. What were your parents' names?

K: Father was Clifford. No middle name. Mother was Juliet Margaret King. Her father was Thomas J. King who was in the hay and grain business in Oakland before coming to Hawaii. Mother's mother, my grandmother, was born on the island of Kauai. Her mother was born on the island of Moorea in Tahiti. The London Missionary Society.

Her father, William Henry, had come out in 1797 from England on the original missionary ship to the Pacific. The group was formed in London after all the bad talk of what was happening in Tahiti and what was going on--infanticide and that type of thing. The English wanted to send out this group of volunteers to see if they couldn't go out and stop this awful sort of business that was going on. They were Christians and they wanted to do right in the Pacific. They were very straitlaced.

S: And your father's family?

K: Father was from New England. He was born in Newtonville just out of Boston. He went to Newton High School. That's where he met Walter Dillingham. Walter had gone back to be a senior in high school with the intention of going on to Harvard afterwards. During the senior year at Newton my dad was his pal there. The two of them were seniors together. My grandfather, my father's father, had died not long before that and the family didn't have very much so Dad couldn't go on to Harvard. He went to work for a leather company. There was a lot of shoe business in that area of New England so Dad was selling shoe leather around New England. (laughs) He hated it. Those New England winters. And having to go out through the snow and the cold.

Walter went on to Harvard and after a year or two he had to come back to Hawaii because the railroad company was going on the rocks financially. His father had a nervous breakdown--old B. F.--the founder. The word came back from his associates, "You'd better come back and help us hold this railroad together." As Walter was leaving--Dad had been to some goodbye parties for him--he said, "Clifford, if you ever have a chance to come out to Hawaii, will you come and visit my family? I know that you're interested. Visit us and stay as long as you want." Hoping that Dad would like it enough to want to stay, of course. Dad was a delightful guy. Dad said, "If I can, someday I will, Walter."

Well, it wasn't long before the leather company that he worked for was merged into a bigger company. Dad's job was eliminated. He'd saved some money so he told his mother, "I've got this money saved, Mother, so I think I'll take Walter up on his invitation to visit him. If I find things are pretty good there and I get established, I'll send for you and sister Helen." He did it.

They came and visited at the Haleiwa Hotel a couple of times. Helen came with her mother. Then not too long after we moved from Haleiwa, he had his mother come out and permanently establish in one of the old, nice big rooms at the old Lewers family home building. Grandma had her room there and Helen had her room there in the main building. So Dad really got his mother and sister nicely established so there'd be family together. Ohana. (laughs)

S: How wonderful. What kind of schooling did you have? You probably didn't start until you moved into Honolulu at about age six.

K: Six. The first grade at Punahou. Then I went to high school in California and one year of junior college at Menlo Junior College. Then the Depression was on. Dad was going to borrow \$1,500 more to send me back. I said, "Dad, it's a

waste of money. I'm not a good student anyhow." My brother George was four and a half years older. Had two more years to go at Harvard. I said, "It's more important that you send George on back to Harvard so that he can graduate from his law course, and I'll help you at Halekulani." I had a chance to work on Hawaii as a cowboy on a ranch up there, which I did for two years, and I loved it.

S: You just had the one brother?

K: Yes. He's eighty and living in Woodside, California.

What I'd like to do is give you, in my words, what I think made Dad such a successful hotel man. This was pretty early in the days of the industry in Hawaii. When Dad arrived in Hawaii in 1901, the Moana Hotel was just being completed and the Alexander Young Hotel downtown. Those two hotels were built in 1901--the year that Dad got to Hawaii.

He went to the Haleiwa Hotel, which was a railroad resort hotel, out there on the Anahulu River near Waialua and Haleiwa in 1909 as the manager out there. He knew nothing about the hotel business, but he was an honest man. He had a delightful personality and Mother knew the whole community. Mother was the belle of Honolulu as a young girl of eighteen or nineteen years old.

Uncle George Lycurgus used to managed the old Sans Souci in Waikiki in those early days. The Sans Souci was a place where the young crowd used to go on Saturday night--they had dances out there. They'd go out in their carriages from town and they'd congregate out there and have a wonderful time. The young naval officers in town. The Navy ships, of course, were in port frequently. Uncle George Lycurgus, at the Volcano House years later, told me when my wife and I were staying on our honeymoon, "You know, Richard, your mother, in her young days there at Honolulu at Sans Souci on Saturday nights, was the belle of the crowd." It was nice because she was so popular. She was a great hostess for Dad in the hotel business.

S: What did he do the first few years that he was here?

K: He worked for Wilder & Company, which was a steamship company. Wilder & Company had a lumber yard. They combined lumber business and the steamship business because that gave them freight out to the other Islands. They hauled freight out there and they'd haul cows back in here from the small plantations. They'd bring sugar into Honolulu in bags. Going in the other direction, lumber was the big thing for people building houses.

S: So they were covering all bases.

K: That's right. They had to haul in both directions. So Dad got a job with Wilder & Company in the lumber yard. That's where he learned about plans, layouts and all that. People would say, "Send us enough lumber to build a little beach cottage." Dad would devise a beach cottage and get all the lumber figured out and how much tin roofing for it and ship the whole thing. Like a pre-cut thing today--so that there was plenty to build a beach cottage or whatever they wanted to build. Dad got pretty good at that. He wasn't an architect, but he could do a pretty good job of ...

S: ...estimating.

K: ...estimating, and he loved to fool with that. When he took over the lease on Halekulani in 1917, Mr. Lewers said, "Now, Clifford, if you want to build any additional cottages or anything like that, you can work out all the details and get a bid and I will build them for you and increase the rent to Halekulani to justify it and you can make a little extra money operating them." That worked out fine. Dad did a number of them with Mr. Lewers. Mr. Lewers was in the lumber business, Lewers and Cooke, so he was interested in selling the materials.

S: It was mutually beneficial.

K: That's how Halekulani grew. When Dad bought out Halekulani from Mr. Lewers--or from his estate--in 1930, we had quite a few new cottages having been built under that plan during the ten year lease from 1917 to 1927 and then for a couple of years we extended the lease. I guess it was actually in 1929 that he actually purchased from the Lewers estate the main Halekulani fee simple property.

S: What year did your mother and dad get married?

K: It was 1902. The year after Dad got here they got married. My brother was born in 1906.

S: Do you know anything about how they met?

K: Mother and Walter Dillingham had been great friends. They played tennis together. Doubles and all. She was often his partner in tennis matches and all that. Dad--visiting at the Dillingham home and all that--Juliet King was very much a part of the family. Going back and forth for the tennis matches.

Walter used to pick up Mother at the corner of Kinau and Piikoi Streets where Mother's family lived. She'd walk over to Beretania Street and he'd come along in his smart little two-horse gig he used to drive. She was teaching

school down where the present library is downtown by the state capitol. He'd drop her off before Washington Place and say, "Okay, Juliet, I'll pick you up at four-thirty this afternoon and we'll play tennis at the Beretania tennis courts and then I'll take you home." That was a long-standing friendship. More than just weekend parties. It was daily. When Dad came, it wasn't long before he had a good girl. (laughs) He decided, "This is the girl for me," and when Mother met him and saw him at these parties and all, she said, "This is the kind of guy that I would like to marry."

S: At which point Walter Dillingham probably wished he'd never invited your father to come over. (laughter)

K: No. He wanted to marry Mother, but she said, "No, I'm not the one for you. You need somebody who's more high-powered than I am." He understood.

S: I'm sure he was very happy for both of them.

K: Yes, he loved her, but he knew that she wouldn't have been happy with him. He was too going. Mother wasn't. Dad was just her speed.

S: Would you like to tell some more about your dad and the hotel?

K: Well, at Haleiwa Dad learned the hotel business. Eight years out there starting from scratch. Walter said when he sent them out there, that they'd been having trouble with the bar. They were doing a hell of a big bar business, but the money wasn't going to the bank to be deposited after the big weekends. Some would go in, but not as much as should have gone. This disturbed the railroad company's treasurer very much.

He said, "Clifford, if you'll just go out there. It's a big housekeeping job, but integrity's the thing. You're a genial host. You get along with people. You and Juliet can do well with the yard staff and the housekeeping. It won't be hard. You'll get your free living at the hotel. It's a pretty good deal." Dad could see not only that, but he could bring his mother out and Helen and visit and stay there at a time it wasn't too busy. It was a natural. Sort of fitted in like a hand in a glove.

And Dad could see the potential of the future for the visitor industry developing, because people from the East would come on a one-time visit, come out on the train and loved Haleiwa and would arrange to come back the following December and spend the winter. They wouldn't go home until April. We began to develop long-staying, fairly wealthy "winter people" at the Haleiwa Hotel.

S: Do you have any idea of how many rooms they had?

K: They probably had about twenty-five. About eight or ten in the main building and then several cottages. It was a dear little place. Two-story. Up on the roof there was a big flag pole on each end. The Hawaiian flag and the U. S. flag.

When I was six years old we moved to town, but when I was four, Queen Liliuokalani came out on the train with a group to have a luau at the old royal fishponds just across Anahulu stream from Haleiwa. They had a big pavilion there where they did a lot of entertaining in the earlier days. This was after she'd been locked up--long after the monarchy --and she came out for a voyage of rediscovery (laughs) with a lot of her pals. The train came further up, across the Anahulu, from the hotel. The train track was out on a big sand bar. You'd get off there and then come across a Japanese arched bridge. It was so cute. They all walked up --a procession of them across the bridge and then up about a hundred yards on the path to the hotel. That little rotunda in front with the fountain working and all that.

Mother had said, "Now, Richard, the Queen is coming tomorrow. I want you to get up early with Tsuneyo (a little Japanese maid who used to take care of me) and you and Tsuneyo pick a lot of the big, double red hibiscus and string them like a red carnation lei." They used to use those. So Tsuneyo and I made this huge hibiscus lei. "You can put it on the Queen when she comes." I was a little guy--four years old--and there came the Queen--a big, old Hawaiian woman. Everybody was beaming, "aloha, aloha," and here was this little squirt.

Then Mother said, "Queen Liliuokalani, I would like you to meet my son, Richard. He has a lei for you, but he'll have to get up on a chair here." So I got up on a chair, she bowed and I put the lei on. Of course, I didn't kiss her. You tell me one person alive today who actually, physically, put a lei on Queen Liliuokalani. (laughs) There isn't one person in this world besides Kingie Kimball. I'm sure. That was over seventy years ago. I'm over seventy-six. I have lots of memories.

They went on over and had their big luau in the pavilion which was about two hundred yards from Haleiwa Hotel. They came back and took the after-dinner train. Every Sunday OR&L (Oahu Railway and Land) put on a special "limited" that came out from town early in the morning and came right straight through to Haleiwa. Golfers came out for the day. You could come out for the day and have lunch and supper. This royal party group came, Liliuokalani's party, and they went home that evening after the luau. The "limited" went back to Honolulu with no stops--full speed all the way.

S: It was a Sunday excursion for people who lived in town.

K: That's right. People would come to the hotel, but Liliuokalani did it with her own royal property there. I remember that Oscar Cox was in charge of the fishponds there. He was the road overseer for the county. A big Hawaiian guy. He was in charge of the whole thing. Tsuneyo and I went over. Mother said, "You can go over and see the whole thing. You aren't invited to the luau, but you can watch the pig coming out of the ground and the whole business."

S: What wonderful times.

K: Yes, good memories.

Anyway, Dad loved Haleiwa and so did I. So did my mother, but my brother had to start at Honolulu Military Academy because there was no decent school out there. Some plantation families would send their kids in on the train and then on the streetcar way out to the old military academy out in Kaimuki. They had to walk about a mile after the end of the streetcar line. It was exactly where the Kaimuki Intermediate School is now. You know, over toward Diamond Head. That big school next to the cemetery. I guess there were six or eight boys from Waialua in uniform going in on the train. We'd always walk down to the train with my brother. We'd see him off, of course. He'd go to town and not come back until the next vacation.

S: Did they board at the school?

K: Oh my, yes.

S: I meant they didn't stay with other families.

K: No, they stayed at the school. Boys from other Islands came and a lot of boys from this island--country areas.

S: Did they go from first to sixth or eighth grade?

K: They went through high school. They had a football team in the interscholastic league. Played against Kamehameha, St. Louis, McKinley, Punahou and others.

S: Is that where he completed his education?

K: Oh my goodness, no. Mother just hated to see him leave Haleiwa to go to that military school. He'd go in his brown uniform--khaki--and I remember when they had a dress parade, all the drilling and that business, and they had them all in whites and that was at the beginning of Christmas vacation or something. Then we drove back to Haleiwa in the car and George came back with us. When school started again, he had

had a nice vacation in Haleiwa, lovely, but he had to get on the train and go back again. I remember he cried. The little fellow was only about ten years old. "I don't want to go back. I want to stay right here." Well, naturally.

Mother could see this starting all over again with me. I was only six years old. She hated to have George have to go. She wanted to get him into Punahou if she could, but he'd have to board with somebody. Mother told Dad, "We should try to get established in Honolulu." "How are we going to do that? We have a little money saved, but we can't possibly..."

She kept watching the papers to see if a little hotel might not come up that was available to lease and they could run and have the family. One day she noticed that Mr. Robert Lewers was advertising a ten-year lease on the Hau Tree Hotel property, which she knew, of course, was the old Lewers family home. She told Dad, "You know, that's what we ought to talk about. Discuss with Mr. Lewers. See what we could do." Dad said, "Oh, come on. We're happy here. This is a good place." Dad just loved Haleiwa. There was a little golf course there and his friends would come. It was a great life.

Mother went to the phone and said, "If you're not going to call Mr. Lewers, I am." So she got the phone and was ringing--cling, cling, cling. (laughs) Before she got the connection through, Dad grabbed the telephone and said, "Okay, I'll talk to him myself."

S: But she was thinking primarily from the standpoint of you two boys.

K: That's right. She loved it out there, too. It was fun for her. Easy. She didn't have much housekeeping to do. The employees did it all. The whole thing was getting the boys into Punahou. There was a little country school out there, but they all spoke pidgin English. Punahou was a fine school. It was an excellent school then and it is today.

Dad drove in and saw Mr. Lewers and had a discussion. Mr. Lewers said, "Clifford, I think you and Juliet would be just ideal for this. All the furniture and fixtures and all--I want to sell those to you. The kitchen equipment. My idea is to let you have a ten-year lease--a very cheap lease--but you buy everything--beds, everything." "How much?" "Well, I want \$1,500 for everything." Dad said, "Mr. Lewers, I have \$1,000." Mr. Lewers said, "You'll need that for working capital. There isn't much income right now." It was 1917. World War I was on. "You may find it very tough. You should go down and talk to Mr. Damon at the bank."

So Dad went over to see Mr. Damon whom he knew very well. His daughter Mae was my godmother--Mother's close friend. He said, "Clifford, all this is fine. I know you and Juliet will do well, but \$1,500 is a lot of money and this is Mr. Bishop's bank, not really mine although I'm associated with it. You'll have to have an endorsement." Dad blinked and said, "Well, thank you very much." (laughs) Who do you get to endorse your note for \$1,500?

On the way back--he had the old car from Haleiwa--he drove into town in this nice old Cadillac--license plate 883--we called it eight-eight-three. He started back out, but he always stopped to see Walter at the railroad station before he headed back. He told Walter the whole story and said, "I haven't told you, Walter, that Juliet and I want to do this because of the boys, but with the stumbling blocks I guess maybe we can't do it. I'd have to come up with \$1,500 to buy the furniture and everything. I'm going to have to go back and tell Juliet 'good, but not good'."

Walter said, "Now wait a minute. I've never endorsed a note that I didn't have to pay off myself. I've endorsed two or three and I've had to pay them off. But I know that with you and Juliet I won't have to pay it off. You go back and tell Juliet I'm going to sign the note. But first you go back and tell Mr. Damon that you're going to take him up on it. 'Thank you for the loan.' You'll have the \$1,500 when you need it," he said.

Dad was able to go back to Haleiwa and tell Mother that they could take over the first of September. That was when school begins. George started at Punahou. I was a first grader. My aunt lived in Manoa not too far above Punahou school and I'd go down on the streetcar from Manoa. I stayed with my mother's sister, Aunt Mamie, for the first couple of months. My brother stayed at Halekulani and came on the streetcar from Waikiki. I started at first grade and George was in fifth grade. So that was how we happened to come into Halekulani.

Well, Dad having had the hotel background that he had for eight years had good training. One of the big things that he knew was good food. We had a darn good Chinese cook out at Haleiwa. Haleiwa had a little river there and a fish market. The boats would come up the river after bottom fishing all night for opakapaka and kawalea. There were a lot of good bottom fish. They'd come in with them in a box in their boat with a puka for circulating water. They'd come in with live fish. So the market had fresh live fish. I'd go over in the mornings sometimes with the cook and watch him select the fish that he wanted. He bought for that night or for lunch that day. That was within a hundred yards of the hotel. The boats would come up to a little pier there and the cook would walk over and get the fish that he wanted.

S: You couldn't get much fresher than that, could you?

K: They had beautiful fresh fish at Haleiwa. When he began to go down to the market from Halekulani--driving his car down--he had a Buick touring car, I remember--he'd buy fish and he didn't have jump seats, but there was a space between the seats and he'd turn the mat back, put newspapers down there, lay whatever fish he had, and throw the mat back up. Often he'd be picking up hotel guests to take them back out. He'd drop them downtown if they wanted to go to the bank or something, and tell them he'd pick them up in half an hour and go down and pick up some fish and take them back. (laughter) I can remember that very well.

He dealt with Mr. Nagano always. Mr. Nagano would get whatever Dad told him he wanted. Then he began telling Dad about mahimahi. He said, "You know, Mr. Kimball, you should use mahimahi. You don't take it." Dad said, "What's mahimahi?" "Well, that's this long fish. Very good. It's like a slab, a fillet of beef." He described the whole thing. Dad said, "Gee, we'll try it." We started using it and the cook loved it. Cut the whole thing down and just slice right there--zing, zing, zing. And delicious.

Dad figured out more different ways to use mahimahi. The favorite way for me was "scalloped kumu." This was leftover mahimahi that you had from the night before. It was steamed or whatever you'd done and they hadn't used it. We'd have it steamed with cream sauce and egg on top of it and different things. That was the fish course because they'd have the main course after that. There was fish left over the next day and Dad would have them mince it all up and get these great big shells--not clam, but scallops--about the size of this (ashtray approximately eight inches) and in that he put this with a breadcrumb crust on it and bake it in the oven. Oh boy, it was so delicious.

S: Kind of like a baked croquette?

K: Yes, but a nice helping. He didn't call it cooked-over mahimahi. He called it "scalloped kumu." Now we never bought kumu for the hotel, but we knew what it was. It was a nice little red fish. Delicious. But Dad called this "scalloped kumu." Local people would come and they assumed it was kumu. They'd say, "Clifford, that kumu you have is delicious." Dad would say, "Yes, yes. It's good, isn't it?" (laughs) That was the beginning of the use of mahimahi. In eight years at Haleiwa we never used one because the little boats going out never caught mahimahi. They were bottom fishing by themselves anchored out there fishing.

But at the harbor here the tuna boats would come in with aku for the cannery. This is around 1923, six or seven

years before the Royal was built. When they'd get finished unloading the aku, there was always some mahimahi because they'd catch mahimahi as well as the tuna. The cannery didn't want the mahimahi and the guys on the boat didn't want the mahimahi. There was a Hawaiian guy who used to wash down and guard the boats until the crew came back to go out again. Maybe two or three days or overnight. That was his job--to watch the boats.

Well, he had this mahimahi given him. It was a throwaway fish, practically. That was how he got his pay. He'd take them down to Mr. Nagano or Mr. Nagano would come and pick them up or whatever so he always had mahimahi. He was trying to get rid of this mahimahi, you see, and he told Dad, "You'll like it." (laughs) We used it more and more. We were the first ones, I think, I really do, to use mahimahi and to have it on the menu as mahimahi. Now this would have been around 1920--long before the Royal was built. Then the Outrigger Club began doing it. We were the first--the Outrigger and Halekulani. A lot of people can remember it from the Outrigger Club, because they didn't necessarily come to Halekulani, but oh, that grilled mahimahi at the Outrigger.

Of course, the Outrigger always had poi. These young fellows wanted poi with their fish. Mahimahi and poi for lunch. Halekulani always had poi--a big bowl in the icebox. With their fish they wanted poi. I remember having it. Up until after World War II we always had poi for anybody who ordered fish. We had it.

Dad was very clever. We had the "American Plan"--at a resort you have your three meals. Haleiwa had that, Halekulani had the same, Royal Hawaiian had it, the Moana had it. Three meals. But when you've got people staying there for the winter, not just for the weekend, three meals a day--those mainland people, Eastern mostly--those people are used to pretty darn good eating. Their clubs, their restaurants. They're used to good food. Dad would keep them happy, but it was a job. Devising, getting different things, the variety.

I remember Dad--it must have been in the thirties--I was working with Dad--I started with Dad in 1932 and he put me out in the kitchen planning the meals and buying the food. That was my end of it. He wanted me to learn that end of the business. We'd talk about menus and he'd give me heck if I repeated too often or if I didn't come up with some good ones. I remember him saying, "Gosh, I wish there was some decent restaurant in Waikiki where people would go." They wouldn't go to the Royal because their dinner was all paid for at Halekulani. So we had to feed them there. If there had been a good restaurant nearby, they probably would have gone for at least one meal out of the hotel.

This was in the thirties. Finally, a guy named Ernie Fickendey, who had been a steward on the Matson ships, an Italian guy, opened a little restaurant on Kalakaua Avenue across from Fort DeRussy by Saratoga Road. He called it "The Green Lantern." It was an immediate success. Good food. Dad was delighted because it was not too long a walk and people could go over there for lunch or dinner. Good Italian food.

S: I guess for the Eastern people it wouldn't be something different, but for the local people it was different.

K: But at least there was--it was the first decent restaurant in Waikiki. There was old Heinie's Tavern in Waikiki by the Moana.

S: Was that the Waikiki Tavern or was that something else?

K: Yes, that was the Waikiki Tavern. It had been Heinie's but they changed the name to Waikiki Tavern when Steiners bought it. Speaking of the Steiners. One day in the thirties Dad and I were soliciting money for the Hawaii Tourists Bureau and Dad said, "I want you to go with me to meet old Jimmy Steiner. You should meet him." Normally Dad said, "You do that side of Kalakaua and I'll do this side." But we got along there and he said, "I want you to meet Mr. Steiner."

Mrs. Steiner came to the door--a big old white house they had out there--it stuck out over the edge of the water. She came to the door, "Oh, Clifford, Jimmy's upstairs and he's not dressed properly. Do you mind waiting?" "Oh no, we don't mind." So we sat out on the front porch and next door was a vacant lot with a fence around it. And across the street was a vacant lot with a fence around it. Dad was looking around and saw all this property there and knew that Jimmy Steiner had bought it. He'd heard rumors. Waikiki was a small town.

Finally, Jimmy Steiner came with his white outfit, his vest, his chain across here. I'd seen him many times riding on the streetcar to go downtown. He came and said, "Hello, Clifford. Sit down." We talked about the money raising for the Hawaii Tourists Bureau and this and that. He came through with a little bit--whatever it was he agreed to pay. Ten dollars a month or something. It was either ten dollars a month or five dollars. You didn't talk about \$500 a month. (laughs) You just talked about a little bit.

We got through making whatever agreement it was that he made. He could have paid more, but we didn't hit him for more. Harold Castle of Kaneohe Ranch gave ten dollars a year or something like that. In those days, people didn't care

if somebody only gave ten bucks. After we got through the business part of the meeting, Dad said, "Jimmy, tell me what are you planning to do with these vacant lots you've got next door and across the street. I see you've got quite a bit of property and you own other. What are you going to do with those properties?" "Clifford," he said, "time is working for me." Dad said, "Jimmy, I think you're right. Things are going to change around here." Isn't that interesting? The Steiner property--what it's worth today. And he had a lot more after that. He kept adding to it.

Mayor [John Henry] Wilson was mayor of Honolulu in the early twenties before the Royal was built. One afternoon Dad said to me, "Richard, let's have an early supper. The Mayor has called a meeting of the people of Waikiki over at the old Seaside. He wants us to come over and hear what he's going to do for Waikiki. He's going to do some things for this area. So let's have our supper and go over at 7:30."

Dad and I walked along Kalia Road past where the Macfarlanes lived, past Sarah and Kimo Wilder's property, Bertha Young's. A little road went through the old Seaside cottage grounds. We went out in front. Right out in front was a hau pergola and an electric light globe hanging down. Nothing else. Just an electric light globe hanging there. A little card table had been put up for a desk. The Mayor was there and about six or eight people. The termites were flying around the globe and the Mayor was swatting termites. (laughs) He had a coat and tie on. I guess we did, too. In those days, you didn't go out without a coat and a tie on.

Dad suggested that we move the table from under the light so he wouldn't have the termites all over him and the Mayor thought that was a good idea. (laughs) He had a map or something he was going to show. "Well, people, first we're going to give you a new fire station." Dad said, "Where are you going to put it, Johnny?" "Right here, Clifford, right on the corner of Kalakaua and Beach Walk. That little triangle. That little park there. We'll add some additional property to it and the fire station will go right there."

Dad said, "Johnny, why put it there? Why don't you put it over at the old mule stables where Kapahula and Paki and Leahy are--where the end of the canal's going to be. The Ala Wai Boulevard will start right there along the canal and the fire engines can turn into Waikiki at any point, they can go back up Kapahulu, they can go back out around Diamond Head anywhere, come down to the ocean around the front. That's sort of a hub there. That's the place to put your fire station."

"By golly, Clifford, you're right. We'll put it there." Dad said, "Johnny, while you're at it build an attractive

fire station. Get a good architect. Do something nice." "We'll do that, too." And they did it. That's how things were done in those days. But poor old Johnny, he'd have done something wrong. He had just finished the one down at Beretania and Fort Street--the central fire station. He'd have given us a little miniature of something like that.

Dad said, "Johnny, do you realize how busy Waikiki's going to be some day?" "Oh, do you think so, Clifford?" I can hear him saying it. It rings in my ears. "Yes, Johnny, when transportation gets better and these dirigibles begin bringing people from the East, you're going to find that Waikiki will be a mecca for visitors." "Oh, maybe you're right. Anyway, we'll put the fire station over at the old mule stables." They owned it already so they didn't have to buy it. "You don't have to buy it. Here you'd have to acquire it." "Yes, yes, you're right. I'm way ahead of you. I see what you mean." (laughs) A twelve year old kid sitting there listening to it. I was proud of my dad, believe me, when I'd hear him do that sort of thing.

He could think way ahead. Dad saw the big picture. I inherited that from my father--the ability to anticipate--see what's going to happen way ahead. It's so obvious when you see it later. So many, many things that I have done in my life have been with that that I had bred into me. No special brains. I just happen to have it. Instinct.

Luckily, when I was old enough to manage the hotel for the family, I was given enough authority to be able to do things without question. I didn't have to take it up with the board of directors and all that kind of stuff. At a meeting--the Chamber of Commerce or whatever it was--I could see something that ought to be done and talk about it. I'd say, "Halekulani will do so and so." I'd put the big shots right on the spot. If we're going to do it, how about all of you?

I can give you a lot of details on those things. But that was why I was very effective in representing Halekulani in the visitor industry buildup in Hawaii--because I had the authority. My dad had died, my brother was in the Navy. He was practicing law--after the war was over he married a girl from California and he was living up there for quite a while before he came back here. So there was a long period in there when I had the full responsibility. Dad had died and George was trustee of the estate, but he wasn't here--he was in California--and I was carrying on. Mother and I doing the whole thing. It was always Mother and I together. We worked very closely together. And I didn't hesitate...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

K: To get back to Mother--I was so fortunate that Mother never embarrassed me by reversing what I had agreed to do. She'd always go along with it. I was always careful not to overcommit, but I could give an immediate answer. A good example was when in the early forties, we had begun having Aloha Week.

S: This was during the war?

K: Well, in 1946 or 1947--just after the war. We had begun to have Aloha Week and begun to feel the benefit of it. It came in the middle of the fall during the very big lull we had. We began to pick up visitors at that time. Promotions can be built around that time--the travel industry and all.

The strike hit in '46 I guess it was--one of the strikes. We were a dead duck. No business. Aloha Week had started. They were doing all the buildup. They had a little staff and they were spending money. The Jaycee old-timers--there was a group of about five of them--were the ones to coordinate with the Hawaiian community--whatever ones they were working with--this whole project Aloha Week. Makahiki period. It was a great stunt.

Harry Nordmark was really the sparkplug for this whole thing. They needed money in advance--we'd sell tickets and all later--but to get the cash the five JC old-timers went down to the bank and arranged--I guess it was First Hawaiian--it was then Bishop Bank--a loan for a major amount. I guess it was about \$8,000 to finance the preliminary Aloha Week until we got through with these ticket sales and they could get repaid. It worked once before and it looked like it would be a sure thing in the future. The strike hit and the bank began to get nervous and told these guys, "You're going to have to pay that." They'd all signed the note.

Then the gossip went around and the wives learned about it. This little committee of wives went down to see the man at the bank--I forget which one it was--but it could have been Vin Danford at the Waikiki branch of the Bank of Hawaii. What are we going to do about this? Well, your husbands owe this money. Individually and collectively everyone of them owes the whole amount. How do they want to arrange to pay this debt if this thing whole thing goes dead? Well, the kukae hit the fan. All the wives. Can you imagine? The girls said, "What happens?" "Do you have homes? The bank would have to attach the homes and sell them and collect it."

So anyway the guy at the Chamber of Commerce, John Hamilton, called me and said, "Kingie, we're in a terrible situation. I know you've been strong for Aloha Week and recommending and urging it and all that. I want to call a meeting down here at the Chamber headquarters. I want to call the business leaders and see if we can't raise some

money for that and have some money left over. Will you come down please and be prepared to be chairman of the meeting. I'll have Bill Mullahey be your co-chairman." I said, "Fine, I'll be there tomorrow morning at nine." Or whatever it was.

I thought to myself, "Now I'd better be sure that I've got Matson behind me. I want to know that they will do something." So I called George Hanson, the passenger division head in San Francisco, and I told him what I was doing. I had discussed it with the local Matson guy and he said, "Kingie, I can't authorize anything. That's got to come out of San Francisco." The meeting's going to be tomorrow here. So I called George Hanson and told him exactly what was going on and how important I thought it was that we in the hotel and the steamship business should right now agree to come in on this thing. How can you ask other people in business if we, the front ones, didn't come in right off the bat? I said, "I feel that you should commit for something pretty substantial and we will, too." He said, "Kingie, I have a limit of \$500 that I can commit on my judgment and I'll tell you that Matson will come in for a minimum of \$500." "Fine, Halekulani will do the same. We'll put up \$500, too."

The next day at the meeting I took over as chairman. Bill Mullahey didn't show up, which was typical. Guslander was there. He was managing the Moana at that time. Steve Royce from Pasadena was there. He was over helping Matson get their hotels going again. Redoing the Royal and the whole business. His father-in-law Mr. Lanard who had the old Green Hotel. They also had the Huntington in Pasadena, but Steve was over here from the Huntington helping Matson.

Mr. Lanard had been here with Guslander. He stayed at the Moana, not at the Royal. In Pasadena, he had the Green Hotel. His son-in-law had the Huntington. He liked the Moana. That was his speed. The second-rate place. He and Gus became very good friends and he gave Gus a lot of good advice over the years. They had breakfast together every morning and Gus absorbed from him. Can you imagine? Gus was a sharp guy. So we heard the whole story and explained the whole need for the money. Well, I said, "Everybody knows the whole problem. Matson and Halekulani will put in \$500 each. Beyond that, how do you suggest we proceed?"

Guslander--Steve Royce was sitting next to him--there must have been seventy-five people there--jumped up, "Richard, (he wouldn't call me Kingie) I'll take on the fund raising. I'll be chairman. I don't need a committee. I'll do it. I'll raise the money for you. Give me a week." "Okay, Gus. Okay, everybody. The meeting's over." (laughs)

About two or three days later Gus gave me a call. "Well, I have the money, Richard. I've got \$10,000 all lined up." I said, "Fine, I guess the industry's not going to be in disgrace." "No," he said, "we're all set." I said, "How in the hell did you get it?" "Well, I didn't hit you again because I figured \$500 was about fair from Halekulani, but I hit Matson for a lot more. And then I did this and I did that. And everybody who supplies any food or anything else for the Matson ships or hotels they all came in pretty heavy, too. They're not used to being hit for this thing, but they're all coming in. 'If you don't come in, you'd better look out. We won't be buying much from you anymore.'" Gus knew how to do it with a hammer. (laughter) Isn't that a kick?

S: Not too subtle, but very effective.

K: He got it done. The story had come out in the paper that Aloha Week was going belly up, but it proceeded full force and when the strike was over we had money in the bank. That's the sort of thing that I was able to do. I didn't know when I talked to George Hanson whether I was going to be committed for \$1,000 or \$3,000. Five hundred was enough. All the others came in, thanks to Gus.

I'm not a genius, but I have the knack for doing it and I had the confidence of my mother that I would do it and would not have her say, "I don't think I agree with that, Richard." I never had that happen.

S: What year did your father die?

K: He died just before the war in September 1941 and the war was in December.

In getting the Tourist Bureau back on its feet again after the war--you see, the Tourist Bureau was a committee of the Chamber of Commerce. We had a manager, George Armitage. When the war hit, his \$500-a-month salary ended. There was no Tourist Bureau. He started a little souvenir business--postcards, posters, pictures--all kinds of stuff to sell to the servicemen here. He'd go around selling these things. Racks and all that type of thing. He got a pretty good little business going. Pretty solid. He didn't have to have much capital to get into it and he got really rolling with it.

S: Well, a lot of people made money during the war.

K: Yes. They got started with little knickknacks because they had a lot of population spending money here. It was a temporary population--military. So we had our first meeting, a committee of four of us from the Chamber of Commerce to revive the Tourist Bureau. Lorrin Thurston was chairman; I

was a member; so was Sewell Turner from Inter-Island Resorts; Andy Anderson from the Alexander Young Hotel was on it. If there was a fifth, I can't remember who it was. Lorrin was chairman.

We had this meeting and Lorrin said, "Well, I've called George Armitage. The Chamber has authorized us to re-establish the salary of \$500." There had been a salary freeze all during the war so the salary hadn't changed. "George Armitage isn't the least bit interested in his old job. He's making much more money on his own and he's his own boss. So we're out of luck. We've got to start looking."

We decided to put out a call for people to come in and find someone who wanted to take over the job at \$500 a month. No one thought of anything else because salaries hadn't changed. At the next meeting we had all these resumes from a bunch of guys that had applied. One or two had come to see Lorrin Thurston and talk to him and all that. It was all fine but none of them had any basic experience in that sort of thing. They were just young fellows who had been here or were here in the service, who loved it here, had married a local gal and wanted a \$500 salary.

Lorrin was all for hiring one of them. And so were the rest of the committee. What are you going to do? You're going to hire one of them? I took one look at this whole thing and said, "This is a nice bunch of guys, but good God, we're going to try and start a major industry. You can't do it with a bunch of shoe clerks. You're going to have to get someone who knows the business. Someone who has previous experience and a lot better experience than any of these have. And if you're going to do it, you'll have to get a lot more money." George Armitage had said, "If you'd told me \$1,000, I might have considered it, but not \$500." So I said, "Let's ask the Chamber to let us have another \$500 and we'll put out another call and see what kind of fish we can catch in the net at \$1,000."

Okay. Lorrin went back to the Chamber directors and they said, "That's fine. That's probably what we'll have to do." We put out another net and in that net we caught Mark Egan. Mark was a genius at promotion and so forth. He had been head of the Cincinnati Visitors Bureau. Not tourist bureau; visitors bureau. Twice a week he would go over to Cornell to teach courses at the Cornell Hotel School. He understood this whole thing. He was the Visitors Bureau chairman for Cincinnati. There was a man with that kind of qualifications. He'd been out here during the war in charge of USO kitchens and that sort of thing. He'd been working with all kinds of people. He loved it out here. So he had applied.

We hired him. He said, "Let's have a meeting of all the members." So we met at the Royal Hawaiian for lunch. All the publicity. Everybody's excited. The Tourist Bureau's getting started again. Mark Egan's the man who has been appointed. Everybody's invited--all the previous contributors. We packed the place. There's Mark Egan up there. He didn't tell us what he was going to say. He just asked to be able to talk to everybody. A dynamic guy.

He said, "I think what we ought to do is coin a phrase. 'Hold them at arms length, but hold them'." First thing he said. Everybody clapped. That's good. The Royal hadn't been redone yet. The Moana was a shambles. Halekulani was the only one that hadn't changed. We had nothing. We just wanted people to come, but you had to hold them at arms length until we were ready. Then we'd let them know. That was the first thing. But keep "Hawaii Calls" going.

Then he said, "People don't like to be thought of as tourists. In Cincinnati we called it the 'Visitors Bureau.' I suggest we change the name to the Hawaii Visitors Bureau." (demonstrates clapping again) Okay. Number two. (laughs) Zing, zing, zing. Things began to happen that way. We made the right move, but one coconut (indicating himself) made this thing happen or Mark wouldn't have been working for us at all. We'd have a shoe clerk running the Hawaii tourist industry to start with. I think it was a pretty important juncture in getting off to the right start.

It wasn't long after that the American Society of Travel Agents were having a meeting at the Oglethorpe Hotel in Georgia. Mark said, "Kingie, I think you'd better go back to that with me. I think it's important that we show up and let them know we're alive and on the map out here." This was just a few months after he came to work. Jimmie MacKenzie who had a travel agency, a young up and coming guy, went back, too. As far as I know we were the only three from Hawaii at that meeting--the annual big meeting of ASTA.

This big program went on. They'd met for years back there--the Caribbean area group, Bermuda, all that business. The resorts up and down the East Coast. All that crowd was there. The agents and all. There was a little break in the thing for a minute. Jimmie MacKenzie had his nice big taro patch ukelele. He jumped up on the stage. "Hello, I'm Jimmie MacKenzie from Hawaii and I just thought I'd give you an aloha hello." He gave them a little Hawaiian song, and he sang a little bit, Hawaiian color. Jimmie MacKenzie in front of all these travel agents. A big meeting. Must have been three hundred people there and they loved it.

"You know, there aren't many of us from Hawaii here, but Mark Egan, the director of the Hawaii Visitors Bureau is here. Mark, get up here and take a bow." They didn't ask us

to talk. Mark got up. "We're going to be building an industry." He didn't ask Mark to talk. "And back here--Kingie, come up here. This is Richard Kimball, Halekulani Hotel, Waikiki. Only three of us are back here. Kingie, get up here." He just took over. Everybody clapped. Here are these three guys from Hawaii. We got off the stage and the meeting went ahead.

Jimmie saw the chance to jump in there and give a little change of pace. It gave us a chance to get our foot in the door. As the meeting broke up to go to lunch that day, I'll bet a dozen people came up to me and spoke to me. "Mr. Kimball, I want to tell you, your hotel has the finest reputation. We've done business for years with your father. We know he's no longer living, but whenever we made a request for reservations, your father would give us a nice reply. Our people were always happy. He never deviated from what he said he'd do. We never once..." All these guys came and told me the story. Integrity. Reservations were absolute. So it was good to know.

Mark Egan heard a little of this and said, "You know, Kingie, what you should have is a representative back here because I know you're having trouble with the Matson people. They're telling agents that if they don't book them in the Matson hotels, they can't get space on the ships." There was all that hassle going on. He said, "There's a fellow here who was one of my students at the Cornell Hotel School when I was at the Cincinnati Visitors Bureau. I got to like this fellow Bob Warner. He's a wonderful guy. I told Bob that he ought to start a hotel representation service in New York for all the Eastern resorts. The hotels need that badly. A place where people or agents can call up--a clearing house--representing everybody. He's right here at the meeting."

We met at his hospitality suite upstairs. He had a little hospitality suite, we didn't. We were too small. We didn't have a hospitality suite of any kind. But we went to Bob Warner's and Mark said, "Kingie, you'd better talk to Bob about representing Halekulani." Bob said, "Let's go back in this other room here," because there was a whole gang drinking punch or whatever they had. We sat back there and talked for a while. Bob Warner explained exactly how they worked. They had a sell and report system. The result gives them their availabilities. Warner will confirm right now when a travel agent calls in and wants to know. "Yes, I have such and such and they are confirmed." That's what a travel agent wants. He doesn't want to have to write someplace and wait for a week for the letter to come back. He wants an immediate confirmation.

He explained to me how nicely this thing worked. But the resort has to play fair with the thing. If I've

confirmed something--if I've done it and reported to them they can't say, "Too bad, we've sold that kind of room." You had to send out your availability sheet weekly. It can't get out of date. It has to be current and weekly is good enough to work from. Most of these were fairly advance reservations.

Well, I liked the whole thing. "Let me go back and talk to my reservations guy, Gary Uchida." He had been Dad's secretary. He'd taken over and did all the correspondence and handled all the reservations. This was just after the war. He had been wounded in Italy and came back to work for us not long after the war. You can see how new we were getting back into this.

I came back with a sample of the new sheets and talked to Gary about it and said, "This is what I want to do." Poor Gary was beside himself. He said, "We give up control. We don't know. They'll sell something and we may not have it." I said, "No, they'll have to go by the sheet. You tell them so many this price room and so many that price. When they confirm, they'll have to do it immediately." I said, "Let's give it a try for a while. Let's not go into it too deep." So we didn't give them too many rooms to work with so they wouldn't sell us out. We kind of felt our way with that and Gary started liking it better and better. He said, "Gee, we couldn't live without this thing. Now we can compete with Matson." This gave the agency a chance to deal directly through Bob Warner. That worked beautifully.

Then we had a meeting of the Visitors Bureau Committee at the First Hawaiian Bank downtown and we were talking about how to get more business when we need it. I said, "You know one of the things that's really been good is Dr. Pinkerton's Tri-annual Surgical Conference that's held each third year." He always holds it in the fall like Aloha Week. When they have that, they have their headquarters at the Royal and they all stay at the Royal except for a few who stay at Halekulani. We love it because it means that the Royal's full. A lot of people who would otherwise go to Royal--they avoid it with the convention going on. So we do a hell of a business in the fall during that time, not tremendous, but it improves our period there. They'd come and they'd stay more than a day or two. They'd stay quite a while.

So I thought conventions. Gee, we should get conventions. Bob Warner had a convention department for all the big resorts. He represented the Hannibal convention system. He'd shown me that. He had me come back to New York after the Georgia thing and he showed me the whole set up there. I told the Visitors Bureau directors that day. Mark Egan was sitting right there. "What we need is a convention department so that we can get after these conventions." Everybody pooh-poohed me.

There was a Matson guy there at the meeting who said, "We can go after either the pre-convention or post-convention on the West Coast. They can come over on a Matson ship either before or after the convention. Bring their wife over and that, but to have the conventions here--you'll never get conventions in Hawaii. It's too remote."

"Well," I said, "Dr. Pinkerton has done it. How about this last month or whenever it was? In other words, when they met here and we didn't have a place for the committee rooms when they wanted to show films and all." A surgical conference--they've got to have rooms. Air conditioning. We used the old Queen's Surf and the old Deering building that Chris Holmes had bought, but there was no air conditioning whatever. To darken these rooms they pulled the curtains and all these poor devils sat in there sweltering. Slide shows and this and that are important. Two or three going on at once.

Dr. Pinkerton asked if he could meet with the Visitors Bureau directors. He said, "Gentlemen, ..." This happened afterward. I said what we ought to do is set up a convention department. This was before Dr. Pinkerton. I said that we should start thinking about conventions. I'd known about Dr. Pinkerton's--how successful it had been prior to the war. We'd had three or four years before the war began--every third year. I knew that I was talking from experience. The need for it. In the fall when you needed the business.

Not one person at that table pricked up his ears at all. I said, "Damn it, I know this thing is right." Finally, the chairman--I guess it was Lorrin Thurston--said, "Kingie, why don't you be the chairman of the committee and you work up the thing." I said, "Fine, I don't need anybody else. I'll be the chairman and I'll do something about it. I'll come back with a recommendation."

After the meeting--Mark had kept his trap shut at the meeting--he was smart--he said, "You learned your homework on this thing. You're damn right you're right about that. Bob Warner's got that department." I didn't try to brag that I'd been there. I just said that I know we need to do it. When I got back to my house, I called Bob Warner on the phone. "Bob, we just decided we're going to think about it. I'm chairman of the committee to work on it. What kind of a proposal can you make for us that we could go after the convention business for the Visitors Bureau without spending an arm and a leg to do it? We have to begin somewhere."

"I think that my associate on the West Coast, Glenn Fawcett and I, could give you good representation. He does the same thing on the West Coast that I do on the East Coast

here. I don't know what he would charge for his services, but for my convention department here--I'll give it a try for a few years at \$500 a month. When you get the thing going, you'll have a convention department right here branched in New York working on it. Every big meeting that's held, our people are there and we can start signing up conventions right here."

I said, "Okay, Bob, we've now got a convention department. Thank you." Five hundred bucks a month. I told the committee that I'd committed us for \$500 a month. They were delighted that that was all it was going to cost us. "You're a good chairman." Glen Fawcett came in for a smaller amount. I think \$300 a month. That was the beginning of the Hawaii Visitors Bureau convention business department. But it was a dead duck at that table until I said I would do it.

S: Then how did you go about with the hotels having the rooms and facilities ready for these conventions?

K: Well, hell, Dr. Pinkerton did that. He asked us to please let him come and talk to us after he'd been shunted around to the Queen's Surf. They had to air condition the rooms by putting curtains around and an electric fan in the corner or something like that. He asked to come and talk. He was just bitterly mad.

At this meeting--I'll never forget--he was a damn intelligent man and he said, "Gentlemen, you think you're getting into the tourist business. You treat people the way my people were treated and I'll never subject them to that again. We're finished three years from now. We'll never have another one if we don't have a proper... These guys go to conventions all over the place and they have the proper facilities. Air-conditioned rooms and everything else. I've been to them. I know. If you haven't got it before the next one a year from now--it's committed and going--we won't build up for one for the third year. You can forget it. There won't be any Tri-annual Pacific Surgical Conference. I'm going to just forget it."

And he used to run that whole damn thing with his secretary doing it. He gave her money out of the--spare time--extra thing out of his office. Imagine. That was a job that a convention department does. Take that over from off his hands. Well, he really shook these guys up.

So Matson talked to their San Francisco people and they decided in building the Princess Kaiulani Hotel they would add convention facilities on the side towards Liberty House. They've got that big long building there that can be cut up into three good size rooms or you can throw the whole thing open. It's not an ideal thing, but it's all air conditioned

and it was something. In building the Princess Kaiulani that was the first--the start of something. You could say we were beginning to get convention facilities. After that as more and more hotels were built everyone built better and better convention facilities to try to get the convention business. Now it's gone to the far extreme. Now they want to have the whole God damn Fort DeRussy area mauka of Kalia Road as an enormous great thing and talk about 2,000 car parking. Now why do you need 2,000 car parking for a convention that's being held in Waikiki? You can walk or take a pedicab or a taxi. But they don't need 2,000 cars to park in a garage underground. This jackass Kelley's son, Dr. Kelley--why do you have to bring all the traffic into Waikiki? Ridiculous.

S: What do you think about the idea of a convention center itself?

K: You need one. San Francisco's got a grand one. Moscone Center. So what we need is a better one than San Francisco. They've got a better one in Singapore.

S: But you like the idea of the Fort DeRussy location?

K: No, if it's going to have to cater to local people as well as visitors, no. If it's only for visitors and you don't ever use it for any except visitor purposes, fine. Because you don't have to have all this damn parking and bring all the wrong kind of people in there when there's no convention going on. Hell, conventions only last a few months of the year. The rest of the time you'd have to have basketball games there, everything else.

Put it down at Fort Armstrong or someplace where it's away from.... They say, "It's not convenient for the visitors." Well, hell, if you get sent by your company to attend a convention in Honolulu, you're going to get there if you have to ride a bus or a taxi to get there. You're going to get to it if it's in the heart of Wakiki or off to the fringes. We've got a lot of land that we already own. We don't have to buy it. Think what we would have to pay for Fort DeRussy. We don't have to buy it. The hell with that noise.

S: Plus the fact that it's created a lot of animosity to put it mildly.

K: And here's Dr. Richard Kelley with all these hotel rooms lined up to fill. He's the front man. Are we supposed to help him out of his dilemma? He's going to load us with a white elephant. All that has to be used so that it won't be a white elephant. Bring the swarms of local people in to go to basketball games there or concerts and all the rest. No, that's no place to have it. Waikiki should be for the visitors. It's just as simple as that.

S: I didn't mean to interrupt your train of thought, but while we were talking conventions

K: No, I'm glad to get that in. That was a good time.

I can usually get back on track again if I start collecting my thoughts again. A major one. I didn't go to the meeting of ASTA at Bermuda because my resident manager Gwynne Austin, a dear friend, at Halekulani had never been to one. I kept going. I was the guy who got all the trips and I thought that Gwynne was entitled to one. The ASTA meeting was going to be in Bermuda and I'd have loved to have gone, but I said, "Gwynne, it's your turn. You go." This was about 1947. He went and Mark Egan, of course. There was a bigger group from Hawaii by then. Lorrin Thurston and Bill Mullahey.

They saw how the Caribbean area was working as a group together to get people to develop the Caribbean area as a travel destination area. Not each one trying to fight for their own but to develop the Caribbean. The Bahamas, Nassau, the whole area.

So they came back with this idea that we've got to do something. Mark could think pretty big and he said, "Let's talk about the Pacific area. Come out to the Pacific. Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, and the whole business around. Let's call it the Pacific Area Travel Association. PATA." I wasn't at the first meeting they had because the group who had been there got together. They had talked about it coming home on the plane. They already decided. They got together for lunch and Gwynne sat it on that.

He said, "Kingie, you've got to get in on this. You go to the next meeting. This ought to get going because it's a hell of an idea." The next one was held at the Moana Hotel --lunch at the Moana. I went to it. There was a guy from the Philippines. Modesto Farolan. He was the Philippines Consul at the time. He was enthusiastic about the idea. I don't remember the names of all the ones around the Pacific, but Modesto was so keen on it. "Please, we need some interest in tourism. We've got the old Manila Hotel out there and we've got a lot of this and that. Why don't we have our next meeting at the Manila Hotel?" We'd had the meeting here and everybody had to come here. Okay. We went to Manila to a meeting there.

Well, the Manila Hotel. It had been taken over by the government during the war and was still being run by the government. And politics. And all the bills. These guys would run up bills and didn't pay their bills. The place was terrible. The air conditioning was off. It was a disgrace.

Modesto Farolan from Hawaii was back there. And he was addressing--he was going to get bigger and bigger. There was a president of the Philippines at the time, Magsaysay. President Magsaysay. This damn Farolan had engineered it so that President Magsaysay wasn't even invited to come and speak to the PATA meeting. They ignored him as if he wasn't there. This was the kind of treatment he was getting from the top people in the Philippines.

It's true. How do I know? Because a group of us got out of a taxi in front of the hotel one time and standing on the steps of the hotel was this nice big Filipino fellow. "Hello, fellows, I'm President Magsaysay, president of the Philippines. I know your conference is going on here and I thought I'd like to come and meet you." So gee, "This is Mr. Richard Kimball from Hawaii and so and so." "Let's get together and have our picture taken here." He had a photographer. "Come on, let's all get in the picture here." He was a great big fellow--taller than anyone of us. And we chatted for a while and that was that.

I was asked by the press at that time what I thought of Manila and the whole thing for the visitor business. And I said, "Well, the first thing you'd better do is get that damn Manila Hotel out of politics and put it out for lease and let it be properly operated privately. It's a disgrace the way it's being run now." It came out in the paper the next morning while I was still there. I should have kept a clipping and I should have kept the picture of us standing with President Magsaysay.

The next time we had a meeting somewhere in Asia, my wife went with me and I insisted that we come back through Manila. The Philippines were pepping up and the visitors--Madame Zamora had taken over the hotel. She had leased the hotel and refurbished it and it was going great guns as a private enterprise. This was two years later. The alternate meeting was held in Honolulu and we went back to one probably in Singapore. It was tied in with Malaya. Then we went to Kuala Lumpur. It was fun to go to those annual PATA meetings.

One was held in New Zealand at the Chateau Tongariro out there. A resort on the mountain there near Lake Taupo. Then we'd come back here. Then we had another one in Australia at Canberra, the capital. The one at Canberra we almost didn't get it for a while. They wanted to hold it in Santa Barbara. I said, "What the hell!" "Santa Barbara wants it." I said, "So what!" This was at the meeting in Tongariro when they were selecting the site for next year. The guy from Matson, George Hanson, said, "Well, Santa Barbara's made a pitch, Kingie. Santa Barbara would like very much to have it."

I got up at this plenary session--open discussion before we voted on it. "That's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of," I said. "Look what we did for the Philippines when we went out there. Our meeting was there and they needed us. Look what we are doing for New Zealand." I was asked to speak up about what I thought of how things were in New Zealand at the meeting. I said it was lovely country. "I love it out here. But my mother was here a year or so ago and she came home and said that it was just beautiful. She said, 'New Zealand's a great place. It's fifty years behind the times.' I didn't say it. Mother said it, and I found that she was absolutely correct." I didn't have to worry about whether I said it or not. Some guys were sore as hell at me for saying it. What are we there for except to help them get going?

Anyway, Australia wanted it very badly. They had the votes to have it in Santa Barbara. I said, "Now, come on. That's ridiculous." Grant McConnolly, the head of Canadian Pacific Railway, representing his company was at the meeting. He didn't send a guy. He was there. A few other big shots were there, but I don't think any other company had its head man there. He said, "I want to get up and second Kingie's motion. I think it's absolutely ridiculous. We're trying to develop the Pacific out here. We're not trying to develop Santa Barbara. My airline doesn't have a flight to Manila, but we come out this way. We go to Hong Kong. But everybody ought to realize that this area is going to be developed. Let's have it out in the areas where it's wanted. Australia wanted it badly. Why pass them by for two years and have it in Santa Barbara?" But if I hadn't spoken up, it would have been in Santa Barbara. I can give you a lot of things like that.

PATA headquarters was switched from Honolulu to San Francisco because so many of these companies had offices there. They wanted to shift it up there. We started it here, but the headquarters should be in San Francisco. The fellow who had been running it here in Honolulu was taken up there to run it.

They were looking for a guy to head it up at San Francisco. I got word that they had already chosen one, but I was a director of PATA representing the hotels. The countries, the organizations like the Visitors Bureau, the airlines and railroads and bus companies and hotels all had representation on the board of directors for PATA. They had meetings once a month and I would usually go to them. I got word that George Hanson had decided that someone was going to be the candidate. We didn't choose him, but he was going to be a candidate. I heard who it was. It was a guy I knew.

I called George on the phone and said, "George, for Christ's sake, please shut up and don't tell anybody that's

what you're going to do--to put him up as the candidate. Let's just say that we're thinking about it and we hope to find an appropriate candidate, but for God's sake don't get this thing to the point where it would be an embarrassment to everybody." So he agreed that he'd shut up.

When I got to the meeting in San Francisco a couple of weeks later, George said, "Well, we've got a wonderful inquiry here from a man that we think would be perfect for this job, but at the moment he's back in the Middle West conducting a fund-raiser for a major college. When he's through with that, he'll be able to come to work for us, but it'll be a few weeks." His name was Marvin Plake. He'd been in the publishing business in the Orient. He'd had experience all over the Pacific. Same salary. He went to work for us. Now the guy that was going to come to work for us if George Hanson had his way--and it obviously was going to happen--I've seen it happen so much--had never been out to the area. He was representing one of the areas in San Francisco. He was a nice guy, but...

S: ...just did not have the background.

K: That's right. Anyway, Marvin Plake was chosen. Hell, I didn't choose him. They gave it a little time to work and by the time I got up there it was already set. Here's this wonderful guy. So that was the beginning of PATA which is a tremendously successful thing today. But we'd have had a small-time guy heading it up.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

September 11, 1986

K: This morning I'd like to go pretty much into my participation on the City and County Parks Board and parks system which the City Parks Board was responsible for. It was a combination of Recreation Commission and Parks Board. It is now called the Department of Parks and Recreation. This was done just after the war. It was a very smart thing to do because the recreation and all has to be done in the park system.

We had at the time and for many years an excellent executive head of the department, Eddie Lyons, a part-Hawaiian fellow who just was a genius at details and knew how to get things done at the Legislature. When we had a little piece of legislation we needed, we on the board said, "Eddie, you take care of that." It really was the way to do it.

My previous three sessions in the Legislature taught me that if you want to spring some money loose from the City and County Board of Supervisors (it was called in those days)

for a specific project, it had to be forced on them. They should be mandated to do it. I learned that from the other Islands. Their representatives would get a bill like that through and signed by the governor and then it became a law. That was the only way you could do it because otherwise the county would balk. "We don't have to do it. You have no authority over us."

So when it came to redoing the park system on Oahu--why did I realize the need for it? Well, I came on the Board as a member. Just after the war. Johnny Wilson appointed me to the Board. Colonel John Kilpatrick had been chairman of it for many years. He was a retired Army engineer. Luckily, the Parks Board had a very good small planning department--three or four very good employees. He had been working with them on detailed plans such as the road to the facilities at Hanauma Bay. That was his favorite project. And the Blowhole. He thought that since that was part of the park at Koko Head Park that a proper parking facility should be provided because that's quite a place to park and see not only the view but watch the Blowhole perform. He had that one planned and ready to go. These things were ready to go for bid. I could see that what we needed now was some money.

When I was first appointed on the maintenance committee, I asked Eddie Lyons, "Eddie, what does the maintenance committee do?" "Well, there's a chairman. He works in the back and he never calls a meeting of the maintenance committee. He never comes around except for the meetings in the office." I said, "There's so much maintenance to be done." "That's why I wanted you on the maintenance committee, Kingie. You're familiar with the maintenance of Halekulani's grounds. We're just on a bigger scale. I'd like to have you on the committee. I'd like to have you go out with the new man who's filling the job of Johnny Cummings who just died." Johnny was interested in orchids because Lester McCoy, who had been head of the parks, had for many years been into orchids. So ninety percent of Johnny Cummings' efforts were on Foster Gardens and the orchids and he minimized the general parks maintenance outside. So for many, many years the parks had been basically neglected.

S: And that in combination with the war.

K: That's right. It was pretty much in a shambles. He said, "Kingie, would you go out one full day each week with Sam Haina (the fellow who was in the office). I'll have him go and be the outside man. You train him and make sure that he's doing things the way you think he should." So Sam Haina would pick me up every Tuesday morning at Halekulani--swing right by my office--and we'd start out about eight o'clock. Spend the entire day doing half of

Oahu one week and the other half the next week. Oahu was divided by Nuuanu Street.

We started out on the Diamond Head side the first day. We were in the annex at City Hall at that time and as we came along we stopped at Moiliili Field which is by Isenberg. We swung in there and parked the car and started across the baseball field. As we got out by second base I noticed this very pungent fragrance. (laughs) It smelled like a swamp. I looked around and noticed this very green spot not too far beyond second base. We walked over there and I said to the park keeper who we met as we came in, "Holy smoke, why is this leak going on?" "Oh, Mr. Kimball, I've been reporting this thing since before World War II, but nobody every comes and fixes it." I said, "No wonder it's been running and running and turned into a swamp here." He laughed and said, "Well, I'd sure like it to get fixed."

I said, "Sam, get your big yellow pad out and we'll put down Moiliili Field here. Number one, repair that." We walked around there and that was the only serious thing. He kept it mowed. Everything was fine. The little facility was in pretty good shape. The toilets and all that. It wasn't too bad. But it really struck me that since before World War II that thing had been leaking.

Then we went on to the next place and the next. Every where we went there was something. (laughs) Not many as bad as that. In one area they had a type of weed that grows very strong. The horses love to eat it. When you mow it, it gets flat and it makes a hump. The only way to get rid of that weed is to take a sharp hoe and dig it out. Then you mow and the Bermuda grass closes in.

So I gave this park keeper the dickens. I said, "Why don't you dig these out?" He said, "Mr. Kimball, very hard. My hoe is not sharp." I said, "Where is your hoe?" We went over to his shed and he went in the tool room and brought it out. It was a dull, dull hoe. I said, "Where's your file?" He said, "How many times I requested file and they never give me a file." (laughs) Sam put on the legal pad all the things required.

The next time we came back there--because it was a month before we got back to that park again--I said, "Where's your hoe?" He said, "You don't need to look. Look at the field. No more that kind weeds, Mr. Kimball." (laughs) He'd cut out every darn weed that was causing this awful situation. Little, tiny things.

S: Yes, nothing major, but minor things that added up.

K: Neglect. Well, it went on and on. As we went around--the park keepers in the different places--the nicest guys--they'd say, "Mr. Kimball, the people here--the kids love the park, but we don't have any night lights. I wonder if we could get some lights so they could play basketball and volleyball at night. That's the time--weekends and that. Keep the kids out of trouble. They'd all stay here and hang around in one place under the light. The parents would know where they are. The police would know where they are. It's easy." The park people would put the ideas in my head. It wasn't my idea. I said, "Okay, fine. We'll see."

I'd be adding in my head, "Now that can be done for way under \$25,000." The next one was they wanted a little comfort station. It was pretty far away from things and they did need a comfort station. All right. Then I said to Sam Haina, "Let's get each of these park keepers to come up with a project for his park. Ask the park keepers to call the neighbor people whose kids use the park to come and discuss what they would like. No grandiose ideas. It has to be something that we can do within \$25,000."

I remember one in particular. They loved to play softball there, but it wasn't quite big enough. They needed one vacant lot that was fenced off. Private property. If we could buy that. The park keeper pointed that out. The people said, "If we could only have that, we'd have a decent softball field." Well, it came within the \$25,000. So we worked up all these different things that were needed.

Then I began to think, "Boy, what we ought to do is go to the Legislature and ask them to approve and mandate the City and County to sell the bonds to pay for all these items and tell Kilpatrick to get the planning done for the Hanauma Bay improvements, for the Blowhole improvement, for all these things. We can put all these things into the package."

When we got through, we had a Kapiolani Park sprinkler system across from the Outrigger. That was just a dust bowl during the war years. The wind would blow. The dust would blow down in that area. We should put a sprinkler system down through the park. Eddie Lyons said, "You know, the zoo's in pretty bad shape." And we'd been given all those animals by Frank Locey from his dairy and Chris Holmes' collection from Coconut Island--the little elephant and this and that. "Let's put an item in there for zoo improvements." Three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars or something like that. We had all these things and it came to two and a half million dollars total.

We had a bill drawn up for the Legislature and this list itemized every park and how much they should have. We didn't just do it casually. The planning department reviewed the project that the people in the particular park area requested and the planning department knew about what it would cost to do that. We put an item in and then opposite how much was to be provided out of the bond issue for that project so that there were no ifs, ands or buts. It was going to get done. The money was going to be available. It gave me great satisfaction to have that introduced in the House and it passed without amendment. It went right through.

Went over to the Senate. Francis Brown was chairman of the Oahu Select Committee. The famous amateur golfer. Brownie. He said, "This is great. I'm all for recreation. This is wonderful. I'm for all of this. Where's the golf course?" No golf course.

At that time the Bishop Estate was seriously considering cutting up the entire Waialae golf course as part of the new subdivision they were going to put out there by Farmer's Road and that area. Cut up the golf course into lots. I said to Frank Midkiff--he was chairman of the Bishop Estate at the time--"For goodness' sake, why don't you develop the lots around it and move the perimeter out further where the dairy is, but for heaven's sake, keep the golf course there. That's what makes value." "Well, Kingie, we've decided we need the money for the schools." I said, "You're going about it all wrong, Frank." Well, we couldn't get them not to do it, but Francis Brown put an extra item in there for a golf course (\$750,000) so it totaled up to not two million and a half, but three million and a quarter. The total bottom line figure for the bond issue.

It went into conference committee in the House. The House agreed. It went up to the governor and he signed it. (laughs) It was as simple as that. There was no big talk about it. So suddenly we had enough money--three-quarters of a million dollars--to talk about a golf course. I said to Eddie Lyons, "Eddie, you set up a meeting with the people from the Bishop Estate and tell them we're going to start talking about taking over Waialae golf course." In those days land values hadn't sky-rocketed too much. So he set up his appointment to go down and got his Panama hat and his cigar and walked on down to the Bishop Estate office.

As he arrived there, one of the trustees (they'd been talking about this apparently) said, "Eddie, don't worry. We aren't going to disturb Waialae Country Club. They're going to have a long extension of their lease, but we have an area we'd like to have you consider up in Hahaione Valley where the old Kam School farm was. They had a piggery, a dairy and a poultry farm up there. A hundred and fifty acres or so. You could easily put in a golf course there. Would you ask

the Parks Board to consider that as an alternative for their money?" He said, "Fine, gentlemen. Thank you very much. I'll go back and talk to my bosses."

At the next meeting he told us about his experience and we decided that the first thing--Sam Haina and I should swing in there and take a look the next time we were out in that area. So we did and I came back and said that I thought it was a darn good location for a golf course as far as I could see. We decided that we should have a professional golf course man give us some preliminary thoughts on how it would look as a golf course. Willard Wilkinson had done other golf course projects and done some special work for the Parks Department so we got Wilkie, as we called him, to do us a preliminary plan for a golf course at Hahaione Valley. Well, it looked nice so Eddie Lyons said, "Come on, Kingie, let's take this over and show it to Johnny Wilson because we should discuss a big thing like this with the Mayor just to let him know what we're doing."

Well, Johnny Wilson took a look at it and said, "That looks nice. Where's the water coming from?" Eddie said, "I think there's a new main pipe line on the highway down below. I think we can get county water right there." "It's dry out there, you know," and Eddie said, "Yes, I know." "Eddie, do you know where the water in that pipe comes from?" "No, Mr. Mayor, I don't know. I'm sorry. It's a county pipe." "That water comes all the way from Halawa Valley out by Pearl Harbor all the way across Honolulu. You're going to take water in a pipe all the way out there to irrigate a bloody golf course? You find a place where God irrigates it at night, like the Oahu Country Club, then I'll go along with you and say it's a good idea."

We ended up by getting Harold Castle to give us the land at the foot of the Pali at half-price. He said, "I can't just give you the land, but have it appraised." The appraisal was for \$350,000 for that entire Pali golf course site. We paid \$175,000 cash to Harold Castle out of the three-quarters of a million so we had plenty of money to develop the golf course, build a clubhouse, put in a parking lot and an entrance drive complete with the three-quarters of a million. That should be the Francis Brown golf course. (laughs) Naturally, it's the Pali golf course.

S: And what year did this bond issue go through?

K: It was right after I got out of the Park Board. It must have been 1946 or 1947. Right after the war. We moved fast. Anyway, we decided to go ahead with the irrigation sprinkler system for Kapiolani Park, which was a very important thing for that whole area out there. It made it a much pleasanter area. You didn't have those clouds of dust blowing down there across Kalakaua.

And we had money for the zoo. We had the animals from Frank Locey. What happened was that we had hired a nice young fellow who had been here during the war, Paul Breeze. He heard that we were going to be hiring someone to be taking care of these animals that we had just gotten. We had a few birds. Not much. Just a little, dinky zoo there. Paul went to work for us. He knew I was going to the mainland on business for the hotel from time to time. "Mr. Kimball, the next time you go, go to San Diego and see the San Diego Zoo. Mrs. Benchly there is a wonderful person. She's the directress. It's a private zoo, not owned by the city. I correspond with her. She's been helpful with little things I've been planning."

I said, "Fine, I'll do it." When I got to California, I phoned her and set up an appointment at the zoo in San Diego. I went out there and spent a wonderful morning going all through the zoo. She said, "Now I want you to meet Ralph Veerden, the man who does all of our planning. We'll have a talk with him." So she got him to come to her office and after we had lunch together we sat there and talked. I told him about the money we had set aside from this bond issue, \$325,000 (I forget exactly what it was) and told him how much area we had. He said, "Gee, that sounds very exciting. I'd be thrilled to come and assist you with that." She said, "Well, Ralph, I'll give you a leave of absence if you want, if they'll pay your expenses and help the family defer expenses for the differential." He said, "Oh boy, I'd love to go." She said, "Why don't you figure on about six months? Plan every detail in the area--the exhibits, the whole thing --so you've got a complete package for them."

I came back and talked to Eddie Lyons about it. He said, "I think we can work that out." I said, "Go ahead." I had nothing to do with the details after that. He worked it out with the city. The next thing I knew we had him there working on the plans--you know, our little planning department. The money was available; the bonds had been sold; all they had to do was spend it and spend it carefully. That was the beginning of the new zoo. And that's what we have today. Now they're making some changes, but it's amazing what you can do. We even put the parking lot on Kapahulu. That parking lot was put in from part of that money. Fantastic what we were able to do with that money.

S: It sounds as if things went much more easily or smoothly in those days.

K: Well, it sure did. It was great having the parks under an executive board. All we had to do was make our own decisions. We didn't even have to go to the mayor for approval. We did it out of courtesy with a major thing like the golf course. But little stuff, we just did it.

I'll never forget. Something had to come to our board for approval. It was to get a building permit. Dad Center was going to build the Dad Center apartments at the end of Kalakaua Avenue. He wanted to put those apartments up on a little lot that he had and the zoning would have permitted it at that time. Johnny Wilson didn't want any buildings there. He wanted that whole thing to be opened up for a park--right down to the ocean--the whole way.

He felt that it was wrong to let Dad Center build one because that would start the thing. He said, "Don't allow them to have a permit." Legally, we didn't have a leg to stand on. He just told the guy in the planning department, "Don't issue a permit for it." He didn't issue a permit, but I insisted that the Parks Board say that we did not object to it. That pulled the rug out from under Johnny Wilson's position. He took it to court and the city had to issue the permit. He was so furious at Colonel Kilpatrick and me. The Colonel was dubious about what I was doing. He said, "You know, it 's going to make Johnny pretty sore." I said, "Too bad. Tell him to go to hell."

S: Well, legally, Dad Center was right.

K: Dad Center was absolutely right. Johnny Wilson was so angry that he demanded Colonel Kilpatrick's and my resignation from the Park Board. The Colonel was about to resign. He said, "Kingie, I guess we're going to have to resign." I said, "Tell Johnny to go to hell. We've done nothing wrong. It was a difference of opinion and we think we were right. If he wants us to go, tell him to take us to court." (laughs) That was the last we heard of it.

Not too long after that Colonel Kilpatrick died and who did Johnny appoint as chairman of the Parks Board? He made me chairman. He could see I was getting things done. One thing about having tried to acquire all that frontage out there. For goodness' sake, I felt that any amount of money that we had for parks should be going for things around the perimeter of Oahu and not tied up into one little strip of beach there. That was spending it in the wrong location, I thought. Anyway, Johnny and I became firm friends. (laughs) We had been before really.

Another one was--you know where the Queen's Surf was--where Spence Weaver had the old Deering home which became the Chris Holmes' estate and a project was proposed for the area between that and the big box groin that sticks out there across from the zoo--that nice little strip in there was the Cunha and the Ward estate properties--two big lots--they were just vacant practically. Just little shacks. There was a plan to build a big high-rise hotel on that property. I just thought it was a serious mistake.

Eddie Lyons said, "Kingie, I agree with you. What can we do about it?" I said, "Eddie, the Legislature's in session. Why don't we get them to mandate the city and county to acquire that property for park use. Pay for it over two years. Sell bonds--no, not bonds this time--pay it from the real property tax. We were given so much from that fund. An additional amount each year because that's where our money came from. Give us an additional amount over two years. It cost half a million dollars. For two successive years we had to pay an extra quarter of a million dollars. We acquired those two great big lots there for half a million dollars. That's why there isn't a great big building on that lot. And again, that was something I had learned by being in the Legislature. And I did quite a few more of those.

Another was Kahana Bay. We had a beach place out at Malaekahana Bay near Kahuku. As we'd drive by, it used to bug me to see all these "Keep out" signs along the bay from where the river is--that little narrow strip--there must have been ten "Keep out" signs. It was private property. Beautiful beach out in front. I said to myself, "This should be a park."

Eddie Lyons and I had a bill drawn and Eddie took it to the Legislature and had the Legislature mandate the city and county to acquire that property and sell bonds to pay for it. The appraisal was for \$350,000 to acquire the entire frontage there for Kahana Bay. The Board of Supervisors were furious that we had gone over their heads. They would get no credit for it. They didn't become heroes for it. They sold the bonds and had the \$350,000, but they began using the money elsewhere.

I inquired and Eddie said, "You know, Kingie, this is serious. They're not going to do it." "Well," I said, "let's take them to court and make sure they do do it." The upshot of it was that they had to come around and dig up--in the time they got around a couple of years later when they started the proceedings--they said, "Oh, we don't know who it belongs to." What you do is put the money in escrow and John Doe the thing. Anyway, it cost \$450,000 instead of \$350,000 by the time they got around to buying it, but who did it? Eddie and I.

S: Just as a reference point, what years were you in the Legislature?

K: I was first elected to the 1936-37 session. Then again the following two years--the 38-39 session. I got married in 1940 and I didn't run for reelection. I came back in in 1943 and served one more term. I was in three different sessions. The first two times as a Republican; the third time I became

a Democrat. I was so disgusted with the way the Republicans were doing things in this community I couldn't stand it.

Right from the first in fact they tried their best to prevent me from getting nominated. A twenty-five year old kid. Can you imagine! Thirteen running. And they had telephone networks from Manoa calling people, "Don't vote for Kimball. He's a dangerous person." I had never been in politics ever. But my brother had been in the Attorney General's office under Harry Hewitt. George and that crowd were a pretty gutsy bunch. They weren't going to stand for being pushed around by the Big Five. Charlie Rice was my mother's sister's husband and Charlie Rice was the power of the Senate, of course. And his brother Harold. They had a group of eight so that they actually controlled the Senate of fifteen. That little group--a couple of Democrats and a few Republicans--Francis Brown being one of them, Robbie Hind. Harry Holt from Maui. David Trask was a Democrat. Bill Heen was a Democrat. Henry Freitas. There were eight of them and they were pretty strong in the Legislature.

Uncle Robbie wasn't going to run again and I went to him and said, "Gee, Uncle Robbie, you really ought to run again in the west Hawaii district." "Oh, I'm getting too makule. Why don't you run? How old are you?" "I'm twenty-five." "You're old enough. The law says twenty-five." "Yes, but I'd never get elected." "How do you know you wouldn't get elected? I'll help you and get your Uncle Charlie. Get Oren Long, the school department. The school teachers all think the world of Charlie Rice. You work around and see people. Don't be afraid to go out and talk to people. You can get elected."

Well, I squeaked in number six. Of six to be nominated out of thirteen, I was number six. In the general election I jumped up to number two right behind Walter Macfarlane because the Democrats could vote for me. And the word had gotten around that this was an independent kind of a guy. I had talked pretty independently at the rallies.

I'll never forget one rally in Kaimuki Park. Kaimuki Park on Ninth Avenue--not a full block--right on Waialae Avenue. There was a little bandstand right in the middle of it and it was a downhill slope from Ninth to Eighth Avenue (or whatever it is) and there was a huge crowd. Music. Entertainment. The park was just loaded with people. We all got up and gave our little spiel. When I got through talking, this fellow in the audience got up, "Hey, Kimball, if you get elected, how about try get some money to terrace this place so that we can have basketball court, volleyball court. This place is no damn good the way it is. The ball flies way down on the street. This park good for nothing." I said, "Okay, you help get me elected and I'll see that we get it."

Well, I didn't forget. I went to the Parks Department and asked how much it would cost to terrace that park and do a decent job there. They said that if they had \$60,000 they could do a pretty decent job. There was a lot of rock in there and they could make some rock walls and terrace it. So I got a bill put in to mandate the city and county (this I had learned from other Island guys) to spend \$60,000 improving Kaimuki Park.

Mayor Fred Wright had helped me very much in getting elected. As a matter of fact, he was a classmate of my mother's and she said, "You go talk to Mr. Wright. You know him and you know his son Marshall. He's your classmate." I said, "Sure, I'll go talk to Mr. Wright." When I went to ask him for help in getting elected, he said, "Well, Richie, I'll be glad to help you, but I can't openly do it. They'd cut my throat. The Big Five really have me under their thumb. They'd cut me off at the next election. They're so powerful. But I'll tell you--every time you give a talk on the radio or at the big rallies you end the talk by saying 'and I'm for strong county government'."

When the election was over and I'd been nominated, I went down to the corporation yard by the Kewalo incinerator where they assemble in the morning before they go out with the rubbish trucks. There'd be a whole bunch of workmen there and I'd get up and give my little spiel and always say, "and I'm for strong county government." I went down to thank the superintendent there, Rap B. Cummings, and he laughed. He said, "Kingie, don't thank me. You can thank the Mayor. He's the guy who gave you the password." (laughs)

S: Oh, that's great. He couldn't come out and openly endorse you, but he made sure that you knew how to get the message across.

K: I just squeaked in. I was number six. But you can see how hard--they didn't want independent or out-spoken persons. Anyway, I learned a lot in that session of the Legislature and one of the things I learned was how to get money. The Mayor's secretary called me after the session of the Legislature.

I went to see him and he said, "What's this about Kaimuki Park? Sixty thousand dollars! Where's that money coming from?" I said, "Mr. Mayor, I don't know." He said, "You're supposed to know. Here's the budget. You tell me where I take that \$60,000 from. The Police Department? The Fire Department? The Parks? They're going to holler because they've already got things budgeted. You tell me. Look at the budget here." "Geez, Mr. Mayor, I'm sorry." "You ought to be sorry. Anytime you want something done--our motto is 'Men and money at work.' You provide the money.

We'll do the jobs all right, but you provide the money. Get that through your head." I said, "It's already there. I see what you mean." (laughs)

After that, any time I wanted to get something done I began mandating the city and county to do various things. They didn't like it a bit, but it got done.

S: How long were you with the Parks then?

K: I left the Parks to run for the Board of Supervisors. I thought I could be more helpful where I had some influence. At that time my little daughter Polly, who was about five years old, had nephritis and Mary had taken her back to Minnesota to the Mayo Clinic just as election time was coming up. I had given one speech by then. I went back to be with Mary and the child. I had quit the Parks Board and had gone back there. Anyway, I didn't get elected. Just missed. The highest Democrat and when Manuel Pacheco died I thought I would be appointed by the mayor, but the mayor picked someone else.

S: Who was mayor at this point?

K: Johnny Wilson. And you know why Johnny Wilson didn't pick me? He was under the domination of the ILWU by that time. They told him what he could do and what he couldn't do. He needed the job very badly. The poor old guy was embarrassed with me.

S: Was he in his eighties at this time?

K: Oh, yes. A pretty old man. When I got him to run in 1946, even at that time he said, "I'm too makule. Get someone younger." But I said, "Johnny, you've got it in the coconut. Monty Richards is a nice guy, but what the hell does he know about running a city? Monty is no engineer." After that Johnny got elected and he did the plans for the Pali Tunnel and all that business. Johnny really went to town on that. It was the second time he came to City Hall. You see, he'd been in there for years in the twenties, and then as an old man he came in and he was a hell of a good man.

He said, "When I get elected, you're going to see the Improvement Districts come back again." We'd not had an Improvement District since St. Louis Heights went bust in the Depression. People were scared of Improvement Districts. The bonds and everything else. Improvement Districts were a dirty name around here. Johnny said, "No, you don't have to be afraid if it's properly planned." The whole of the Waialae-Kahala Bishop Estate--that whole area there was done under an Improvement District plan. Everybody there had to

pay for their part of that Improvement District. That was paid for over a thirty-year period.

S: But that St. Louis one. Wasn't that the only time that anything like that happened? Basically, bond issues in Hawaii were a pretty solid thing.

K: Yes, that was an unfortunate thing. They got all the work done, but they had no money to pay for the darn thing. It was partly the Depression.

S: You must have been going full steam during those years. There was Halekulani, the tourism industry, the Legislature and the Parks.

K: And the Waikiki Improvement Association with Alice Bowen. We got the aquarium rebuilt; we got the library at the end of the canal. That was definitely one of the Waikiki Improvement Association projects. We did a lot of things. Alice Bowen was a great person to work with. I was president of that, president of the Hotel Association one of those years. I was active.

S: That's an understatement. You were active. (laughter) And somewhere along the line--you did mention that you got married back about 1940. Where did you meet Mary?

K: She came with a friend of hers. Instead of going to Europe her father talked her into coming to Hawaii. He said, "I'll pay for your trip, but I don't want you going to Europe right now. Hitler..."

S: Oh, yes. What year was this that you met her?

K: Nineteen thirty-nine. She and her friend came and as they came up the front steps of Halekulani--I didn't go out to greet the ship--something else had happened that day--these two young girls came up and I said, "How do you do? I'm Richard Kimball." She said, "I'm Mary Webb and this is my friend Betty Henry." We met and showed them around and put them in one of our least expensive rooms because they didn't want to spend too much.

We began visiting, talking about things. It was raining. It was about this time of year, but a heavy rain had come. They were complaining about the rain. I said, "Oh, but this rain is delightful. (laughs) We need it." "You may need it. We don't need it." We laughed. I asked them to have dinner with me that night and took her out. My brother liked Betty Henry and used to take her out a little bit. Then other friends began taking both of them out. They were pretty popular girls at Halekulani.

Mary had brought her nursing uniform with her. She was a registered nurse. She had graduated from Cornell Hospital and she'd been practicing back there in psychiatric nursing at a place called Silver Hill. You may not have heard of it, but that was a very wealthy people's place. She had been taking care of patients at Silver Hill prior to coming here.

She and Betty had roomed at Cornell Hospital and Betty was from a lovely family down on the eastern shore of Maryland. Betty would have her down there for vacations and all. Beautiful home right out on Shipshead point. We went there later on our honeymoon and visited the Henry family. Betty Henry was an attractive girl, a little older than Mary, but Mary was so fond of her. They were great friends.

S: But they just came here for a vacation?

K: Yes, although Mary brought her uniform. The only time she used it was when she went to Pearl Harbor Navy Hospital as a volunteer right after December 7th.

S: Then she never went back?

K: Well, we went back on our honeymoon two years later. Her parents came out here and we got married here. They came out here for the wedding. She didn't want to go back. "No, no. Let them come here. They want to see it and we'll get married right here."

S: And how long did her friend Betty stay?

K: That time Betty stayed for quite a few months, but she had to go back for her job. Mary was sort of in between so she was glad to stay right here and get married and that was it. (laughs) It was the best thing that ever happened to me. We're very different. She reads a great deal and she's much more cultured than I am, but she likes my "get up and go" and my activities.

S: You complement each other.

K: I guess that's it.

S: And you were married in 1940?

K: Yes, right at Halekulani.

S: So you just knew her a matter of a few months?

K: A few months. Mother and Dad were in Europe at the time. When they came back--Mother and Dad both liked her so much. I told Mother, "You know, Mary and I are going to get married." (laughs) Mary kind of blinked. She wasn't sure she was going to marry me. She gave it some more thought and

she didn't want to back out on that. I had already said that she was getting married to me. (laughs)

S: Oh, that was great because your dad died the following year and he saw you happily married before his death.

K: That's right. He died in September 1941. Not long before the war.

S: And Mary got along well with your mother?

K: Oh my, yes. Mary was great with the older people at Halekulani. During the war years a lot of old people moved in. She'd go around and visit them. Help them. Nurse a little bit, if necessary. She was terrific.

And all the young fellows there at the hotel. She started the moonlight dances we had in the big old dining room there. She got the idea. She and Lois Bruce, who was our social director at the time, were in there one night and the moonlight was coming in through those big skylights and she said, "You know we could dance in here on moonlit nights." So we began having full moonlight dances on Saturday nights. It was great fun. So many young guys. We'd have to round up young girls. They'd find ways to come. They were all working in WARD [Women's Air Raid Defense] or civil defense or something like that. Lots of matches. Maili Yardley married one of the Navy officers there. Shortly after.

Mary was most helpful to me in so many ways. We'd entertain a little bit in our cottage there. After the war we'd invite people up for drinks. Just doing things with the guests. People love to be part of it. Mother and Dad had done that always with the hotel. They'd go overboard to be friendly and nice. Not big entertainment. Little stuff. They like to ask questions. We always had a good social director. Mother would get some real kamaaina so that if Mother wasn't available to answer questions, this person would be. We always had one over the years.

A woman would come and she'd remember a girl she had gone to Vassar with. She knew her maiden name. She'd want to talk to someone. "How can I locate her? Her maiden name was such and such." Well, Mother would know and she'd have a social director who would know, too. Then they could locate. That happened numerous times. They appreciated it so much. Halekulani had that kind of something that we could offer. Not just some malihini hired to do the job. They'd have no way of knowing. So we had that kind of a place.

S: Mary wasn't on the payroll, but she was an unofficial hostess.

K: Unofficial hostess, but she was just great. She had a lot of fun there, too. Our first child was born there a year later.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

November 19, 1986

S: When did you start visiting Tahiti? Was this in connection with PATA?

K: This was before PATA. I started visiting Tahiti in 1956. You see American forces had had the island of Bora Bora. We had to build a 6,000 foot airstrip that the DC-4s could land on going through to New Zealand. We had to have a series of islands that could take the DC-4 for the milk run as we called it. At Palmyra and Christmas Island they had two there, which was 1,000 miles south of Hawaii. The next was at Rarotonga, at Aitutaki, and then Bora Bora. They had these islands because of the weather. If you couldn't land on one, you could fly to the other on down through to New Zealand.

So Bora Bora, which is about 150 miles from Papeete, is a beautiful island. Just gorgeous. The Navy was there all during the war. Beautiful big harbor. My brother George was in the Navy and he had been in Naval Intelligence here. He had his office in the Alexander Young Hotel building when war broke out. He was in Naval Reserve and rather than get in the Army he jumped into the Navy--at least he'd get a commission. He was with Naval Intelligence with Captain Mayfield at the hotel.

But after a year of that--he didn't want to fight the war from the Young Hotel building. He wanted to get sea duty. What can I do? We'll get you as an armed guard on a transport. They have one big gun, a cannon, and so he was to command the crew of the cannon on a big transport. It was delivering cargo all through the Pacific (with a convoy, of course) and on the way back it needed some repairs and they put into Bora Bora for three or four days.

He was the first member of our family there in French Polynesia and he wrote a letter from there--it was put in the naval mail and came back to us. "The ship's having some work done. It's near where our great-grandparents were." Because they were on Moorea in Tahiti. So we knew where he was at that time. He couldn't say where he was, but the fact that our great-great-grandfather William Henry was one of the original missionaries to Tahiti in 1797...that's a whole story. I've got it all written up.

I got interested because of an Australian who used to come through Halekulani just before the war and during the war. He'd come up here to get these big Catalina flying

boats and deliver them down to the Dutch East Indies. He was a flying boat man and these were real flying boats--twin engine--no wheels on it at all. And he sold the Dutch government in Indonesia for all those islands. How are you going to patrol and know what's going on unless you're up there with a flying boat checking on all this area? You can't do it with boats on surface. So he sold them on getting a squadron of PBYs they called them. They delivered right out of southern California. Coronado or someplace down there.

He always stayed at Halekulani when he came through. His crew was at the Moana. He and I used to talk about the South Pacific and all this stuff. He said, "Someday I would like to do a trip from Tahiti across to Santiago, Chile, because someday that will be a route. We will have to arrange to land in the lee of Easter Island because Easter is a high island and no lagoon. But we can have a whale boat and have it filled with aviation fuel so that the launch can bring fuel out to us wherever we land." He would set down to land on the lee, but the wind changed and they had to taxi around and the launch had to be towed around the other side of Easter Island. (laughs) He and I used to talk about this.

He used to tell me about Clipperton Island, which is off Mexico. He wanted to have a flight from here to Clipperton and on through to England. That route you see. And he wanted to establish that as a base. He got them to establish Clipperton--have a fuel base there and he flew from here to Clipperton and on through just to demonstrate these routes. This was way early in the game.

S: What was this gentleman's name?

K: Well, he was knighted. Bill Taylor. Sir Gordon Taylor. He was from Australia. He was the navigator for Kingford Smith when they came up on the Southern Cross when the Southern Cross was to have been in the airmail derby from Australia to London. Putting so much fuel in that one little single engine Altair, they got into problems. The tremendous amount of fuel--the big tanks--they had to make all these conversions so they weren't ready to start out so they didn't win the derby. They got delayed. Kingford Smith was so upset about it. Taylor said, "Well, I think we can go to Hawaii. We can land at Fiji and then take off from the beach at Barking Sands, Kauai. There's a long enough airstrip there we could take off with a tremendous load." They had to have a long runway. So they did that.

This was way early in the game. They went through and on up to California. That was the first flight from Australia to the United States. They missed the air derby to London and the press was sarcastic down in Australia. "Well,

Kingford Smith claimed..., but he was just afraid they wouldn't make it."

When he came up as navigator for Kingford Smith on that flight, that's when he first knew about Halekulani. He just loved Halekulani. He kept coming there when he'd have these PBYS to deliver to the Dutch government down there or the Australian government. It was the same idea of patrolling their coasts with these big flying boats. They had tremendous range. He kept delivering down there. He stopped to refuel at Canton Island--the lagoon there.

We'd talk about the possibilities of the future, passenger travel in the Pacific. Right after the war he got himself a big, we called it a "Bermuda," four-engine British flying boat. It had the same engine as the Catalina--same kind of a Wright engine. A big plane. It would take about thirty passengers. He went to England and flew it out with a group of people coming to become citizens in Australia. He said, "I've got it in Australia and I'm going to be making a trip to Tahiti. Take tourists from Australia and land in Papeete. Why don't you make the trip you talked about to Bora Bora with a DC-4 and we'll come over and shuttle you across to Tahiti?" There was no airstrip on the island of Tahiti 150 miles distant.

I was able to through a French woman who was my friend here in Honolulu...she came to Halekulani...the French government sent a very important French gentleman out for a very important trade fair in Australia--sort of like the major chamber of commerce thing. He came to set it all up in Australia and on the way back he stopped at Halekulani.

He spoke mostly French. I got this lovely Denise Dailey, married to an American banker, but she was a lovely French woman from Paris originally. Still has an apartment in Paris, I understand. She came and she drove him around the Island one day. Just gave him a beautiful day. When he came back from that tour, she said, "You know, Kingie, Mr. (whatever his name was) said that one of the things the trade fair's going to do is have a whole group of French models representing every famous fashion house in Paris--Dior, Jacques Fath, the whole business--and on their way back from Australia..."

Each one would be modelling the items from that particular house. There were ten gowns for each of the ten models. A total of 100 gowns that they would be showing in those big shows down there. "He thinks that on the way back if they could stop at your hotel here as your guests for a couple of days, he'll see that they put on a fashion show at your hotel and you can charge whatever you want for the dinner." You never heard about that?

S: No!

K: Well, it worked out beautifully. Not one night, but two nights. The girls loved it there in the daytime. And we had just seen Woody Brown launch his first catamaran, the Manu Kai, the great big beautiful Manu Kai. It was built out at Kuliouou just at the end of our lot. Bam Sperry McNaughton, I guess she was by that time, Bam had a lot there. It was the old Tenney property. On the end of that property, right on the water was a little beach, Paiko Lagoon, which comes into this, we could see this boat being built there, a catamaran. I knew all about it because I had been down talking to Woody Brown and they had it all figured out. They had the design. They knew exactly what they wanted to build. They had it all engineered.

We used to...at that home we had out there--the old Tenney property that was subdivided by Walter Lamb--we had the ocean front lot which Billie Worthington and Marian Hanrahan had bought. They built a little small house which would eventually be just a portion of a big house. When we got it it was a little house. It was over an acre in a coconut grove. It was lovely. We used to take some prominent guests from Halekulani out there for cocktails about once a week. We'd have them use their cars, U-drive cars, and that hostess from Halekulani would come in a station wagon. They'd follow her out. We'd have a little party there for about ten or twelve or fifteen people.

One day we were having a cocktail party and a man from back East, Mr. Hereschoff of the Hereschoff Yacht Designers--his father had been in the business and he was a yacht designer from the East Coast. He saw this thing being built and he said, "What kind of a boat's that being built down there?" I said, "That's a catamaran." He said, "Oh God, a catamaran, but I'd like to go see it." So he and I walked down to the end of our lot across the fish pond. The makahana. It had a little gate and the water comes out. There was this catamaran being built.

I introduced him to Woody Brown and he said, "How much are you boys spending on this?" Woody said, "It will be about \$25,000, I guess." "What a shame to waste \$25,000 and all your time." Woody said, "No, Mr. Hereschoff, this is going to hold together beautifully. We'll do this and do that." Mr. Hereschoff was the conventional yacht. "This is something entirely different. Special plywood. Laminated. I used to work as a designer in an aircraft factory back in the Midwest."

I had told Mr. Hereschoff as we walked down there, "This fellow is a glider pilot. World record holder with gliders in the Middle West. Flying hours and hours in a glider. This guy knows his business with gliders." He said, "Mr.

Hereschoff, this is on the same principle as an aircraft wing. If you think this will come apart, do you think the aircraft wing comes apart with that great big engine hanging on it?" (laughs) Mr. Hereschoff kind of blinked and said, "Once you take it out on the Kauai channel with the sails up it will come apart. I predict that it just won't hold up."

I took a clipping out of the paper when the catamaran made a couple of its initial voyages--spectacular ones at great speed--and sent it to Mr. Hereschoff just for the hell of it. (laughs)

S: Getting back to the fashion show.

K: The French fashion show was spectacular. It was a great success.

S: Do you remember what year this was?

K: I forget. It was [1956] Anyway, the next morning after the show my public relations man, "You know, the catamaran comes in our Grey's Beach here. Let's get the girls to put on their bikinis, come out on the beach and get them on the catamaran with Diamond Head in the background." We sent out these pictures of Halekulani, the fashion show held the night before, the girls out on Halekulani beach with the catamaran, which is just a new thing, telling all about it. Oh boy, that thing got international publicity with Halekulani named every time. They had to mention Halekulani as the location with Diamond Head. That was the sort of thing that I was able to do to get publicity for Halekulani and Hawaii. For nothing. Just do it.

We made a little bit of money on the fashion show, but just think of the publicity and the prestige that Halekulani got locally as well as internationally. The head guy of this group, the group leader--the French fellow--I forget his name--with the girls was sitting in my office. He had borrowed a tuxedo from me for the night of the show. He didn't have a tuxedo. I had a white tux that I let him use. We had a group of people at our table. We had a ramp built. First class. It was really first class.

Ron Burla, our public relations man at the time, did the whole thing. I was afraid to tackle it. Ron said, "No, no, take it on. Tell him we'll do it. I'll take it on and all the details. Don't worry. We'll do it." Anyway, this Frenchman--I wish I could remember his name--was sitting there talking. He had brought the tuxedo back and thanked me for it. The phone rang and the operator said, "There's a long distance call from Texas. They want to speak to Mr. So-and-So, head of the French fashion show group." He said, "Who's calling?" "Mr. Nieman, from Nieman-Marcus." He said, "Will you talk for me?" I said, "Mr. Nieman, this is Richard

Kimball. I own the hotel here and he's right here at my desk. He just wondered what you have in mind?" "I want him to stop with that group of girls--the whole thing at Nieman-Marcus. We want to put the show on right here in Dallas." I told him and he said, "It is not possible. All these girls are scheduled back and we stayed an extra day here because you wanted an extra day, but we have to get them back. Each one works for a different fashion house and they are counting on them back with these clothes. We just cannot do it."

Mr. Nieman said, "But tell him money, money." He kept saying, "Money, money." He didn't want any money. I said, "Money." He said, "No amount of money can do it. We have to get back to Paris." Mr. Nieman said, "This is so unusual. It's never happened in America before that they've all showed in a combined show." I said, "I'm sorry, but there's nothing we can do about it."

S: So that was really something spectacular for you to pull it off.

K: That's the sort of thing that we did a lot of. You'd be surprised. That was a coup for us.

S: I would say so.

K: At any rate I had very close connections with the French because my great-great-grandfather had been down there and we had relatives come back and forth. One of them being Teuira Henry who did the book, Ancient Tahiti, here at the Bishop Museum. She stayed at my grandmother's house. She was a school teacher, born in Tahiti. Spoke fluent French, fluent Tahitian and, of course, fluent English.

The book Ancient Tahiti was compiled from the notes of her uncle [J. M.] Orsmond, who had done tremendous work of all ancient chants, legends and all that. It's a fabulous work. The whole thing was called the book of Ancient Tahiti. It was published by the Bishop Museum. She did the whole thing. When he died--his original manuscript had been sent to Paris and the story that we got was that it had been burned in a fire back there. She luckily had a sea chest with all of the original notes. Not the main one, but the stuff that he didn't send.

She brought that up here because the group in Tahiti just were dying to get it published and they knew that the Bishop Museum said that they would be willing to do it if she could get it up here. She stayed at my grandmother's home for a long time. Taught school here. Would go out on the street car on Saturdays to the Bishop Museum and would work the whole day there. Ancient Tahiti is fabulous. Anyway we had connections with many of our relatives down there, but that was probably the most important one.

Anyway Bill Taylor said, "Why don't you charter a DC-4 and come down to Bora Bora and I'll shuttle you across? I was up in Tahiti not long ago to get things set up for my business." He'd gone up on TEAL--Tasman Empire Airline--on their big flying boat from Fiji across to Cook Island and then on to Tahiti. Taylor said, "Omar Darr, skipper of the Tevega, (Cornelius Crane owned the Tevega--beautiful big yacht--he had it on kind of a semi-commercial basis.) I've arranged for Omar Darr to be moored in the lagoon just off the airstrip at Bora Bora and you can land at Bora Bora and I'll be based there with my flying boat. I'll have my flying boat moored right there. My wife and crew will stay aboard on Tevega so we'll have a place in case you're delayed or something. We'll have this all coordinated." Preston Moore was the coordinator for Omar Darr. He was the insurance agent--the agent for Omar Darr. He and his wife Madeline were great friends of ours.

But the French governor wouldn't allow us to land on the airstrip there. "No, it's not open yet." So this man who had been here (who originally set up the French fashion show)--I made contact with him and told him that we wanted by all means to have the French allow us to land at Bora Bora. Get the airstrip ready to land. He went to big shots in Paris. I knew he had top connections, of course, so he had it set up that they forced the French governor to do it over his strong objections.

The reason that he didn't want it done was that he thought they would never get an airstrip built at Papeete on the land near the town where it's now built if Bora Bora became usable. It would always be a shuttle. You would land at Bora Bora and then use a flying boat to Tahiti. He thought that there would never be an airfield and that Tahiti would never develop properly without its own airfield rather than being 150 miles away and using a shuttle from Bora Bora.

Other people looked at it differently. If we began shuttling people in and getting traffic, it would be apparent that we had to build at Papeete. Anyway his persuasion in Paris was strong enough that the governor was told to do it. "You get it done." So it was done. They cleared the sides of the runway. Stuff had begun to encroach. Shrubbery and all that. Beautiful setting.

When we landed, they had a little French aviation building there because they had kept it going but only for aircraft that were flying across to Aitutaki. It was a communication thing because when the flying boats came in from Fiji, they would land in Aitutaki in the lagoon and then they had to have a communication near Tahiti to get weather reports and that. Little dinky tower there. So when we got there, landed on the airstrip--in order to get there from

here we couldn't go direct with the DC-4 because there was no alternate place in case the weather was socked in and we couldn't land. We had to go to Canton Island first; landed there and spent the night until early, early morning.

Then we took off from there. Pan American set it up for us. Bill Mullahey was nice enough to set it up for us. Pan Am was trying to pioneer the thing. We were advancing for them. We had a nice dinner there on Pan American at Canton Island. The next morning we left, timing it so that we would arrive at Bora Bora just after daylight. They liked that because in case their navigation was a little bit off or something the sun coming up in the east--you could see the island clearly. Bora Bora. It had a high peak on the top.

Anyway, we landed at Bora Bora and there was Bill Taylor waiting for us and his wife, lovely Joan, and of all things, there was Don the Beachcomber standing there. He was in Tahiti and he heard about it. He was a good friend of Taylor's. Taylor brought him over with him. Well, the French customs and all the big shots were there. They'd come up, too. When it came to the flying boat shuttling our people over, they asked Taylor, "How did Beachcomber get here?" "I brought him along." He got hell for bringing him along without having permission to do it. You know how technical guys like that are. Poor Beachcomber. He couldn't be flown back with us. He had to wait for the Tevega to go back. (laughs) But he was there and he had his picture taken with us.

S: And who else was on this trip?

K: Spence Weaver went down with us. He was the most colorful one of the bunch. Henry Buscher. Stuart Fern helped me organize the whole thing. Stu Fern was public relations for the Visitors Bureau. Walt Collins, the planner. There was a total of fifty; forty-five passengers, all men and a crew of five, four men and one beautiful stewardess, Barbara Jones. (laughs) Oh boy, she was lovely.

S: Was this the first visit to Tahiti for most of these fellows?

K: Every one of them. First time. We took all men because some of our friends in Tahiti said, "Now be sure and don't bring wives on the first trip because you're going to get hung up at Bora Bora; there are no accommodations; something could happen. It's not the thing to do. Come with all men. Pioneer the whole thing. Let them decide what they think about Tahiti." So it was kind of a business exploratory trip.

S: That along with the fact that taking wives to Tahiti was like carrying coals to New Castle. (laughter) We won't go into that part, but I think there may have been an ulterior motive there for some of those guys.

K: Our friends who recommended against bringing the wives had an ulterior motive I'm sure. They had a wonderful reception for us there. You wouldn't believe it. Taylor had to make two trips with the flying boat. It couldn't take the whole bunch of us.

On the first trip, Slim Holt from Hilo--a very big part-Hawaiian, part-Tahitian, he was about six feet four or five--he must have been on the second trip. Someone set it up--this girl had a little baby--and when he landed in the lagoon in Papeete--we taxied up--just full of these little canoes that had come up--they set up to greet us. This was a very big occasion for them. This direct flight from Hawaii. There must have been 150 little canoes out there. Slim got up, stepped on the launch, the launch came in from the flying boat, here was this girl and they said, "She wants to present you a baby, Slim." We have a picture of Slim with this little Tahitian. (laughter) That was just a little gimmick and the beginning of all the fun stuff we had. Just fabulous.

Some of us stayed at the Royal Tahitian Hotel; some at the--I forget--a couple of little hotels. The dance that night, nice food, the girls dancing. Some lovely girls. The girls were dying to get into this group that did the dancing for this bunch of men. They fought to get in. The entertainment crew had to wait on the tables.

S: And I guess the fellows had never seen the Tahitian dancing because it wasn't here in Hawaii yet.

K: No, they didn't have it here. So it was a great bunch.

S: I guess you could say a good time was had by all.

K: Some minor romances started up. Harry Cook was one of the group. Harry Cook's wife was sore. She got kidded about it after he had already gone. (laughs) The women started telling her, "Why did you let him go?" Harry got hell when he got home, but he had a good time down there.

S: He figured it was worth it.

K: Spence Weaver came back in love with the place and in love with a girl down there and ended up marrying her. He brought back all kinds of artifacts. Used them to decorate his Tahitian Lanai restaurant.

S: Did you go back much after that?

K: I took Mary after. But when we first got there, incidentally, we were officially greeted by the Secretary General. He was kind of like the Lieutenant Governor. He apologized and said, "The Governor is off on a business trip to one of the other islands," but he told me privately that the Governor was so sore about what we did about the strip at Bora Bora that he didn't even want to talk to us. He said, "He wanted me to set up this little reception party at my house tomorrow night. Would you like to pick a handful of your group and we'll have a little reception, a cocktail hour."

So I guess eight or ten of us went, but that's what tipped it off to me that the Governor was really opposed to this thing. Not that he didn't want it to be developed, but it was the wrong way to go about it. They wouldn't get the airfield if Bora Bora was the link, and we felt this was the way to get it opened up. Within two years they had the airfield. Within five years a tremendous airstrip was completed. Ready for the new jets. So we kind of pioneered a little.

S: How long did Matson stop there?

K: They used to stop there with the Mariposa and the Monterey. They started just about that time when we were just starting. That was about 1956. They did that for a long time and the people in Tahiti loved it because they would come in, bring a whole bunch of tourists who would buy stuff in the shops. The shops are just lovely. French style boutiques. Really nice things. I brought things back for Mary. Pearls, seashells, beautifully done.

S: Then you took Mary back later.

K: Ernie Kai and I took our wives down within six months. This time we left on TEAL, Tasman Empire Airline, from Fiji. Suva across to Western Samoa. We landed on a lagoon there and then took off the next morning real early for Aitutaki, and then on to Papeete. It's a long route with many stops. When we took off from Western Samoa, we did it in the dark, but hit the next place in the daylight early morning. We were comfortably in our seats taking off at three o'clock in the morning or something like that. We were sitting there calmly towards daybreak. I looked down on my side and one of the propellers wasn't turning. I asked the stewardess. I could see that daylight was coming up behind the plane instead of in front of it.

"We're going back to Western Samoa to land because one of the engines has trouble. We'll have to land and change an engine there." Way out in this lagoon. They had to float

this engine out on a barge they had. We had to stay At Aggie Gray's or the Whitehorse Inn. We stayed at the Whitehorse Inn for five days and TEAL paid all the expenses. The woman whose husband managed the hotel was the sister of Chief Tomasesi--the head man of Western Samoa--a great big man who was educated at Oxford. A hell of a nice man. They had a little dinner party for us one night. It was really unique.

S: A nice little unplanned side trip.

K: We had some happy and interesting experiences. We had a hell of a good time in Tahiti the five days we were there. All these men scattered all over the Island.

S: I'm surprised you could round them all up and get them back again.

K: We had trouble getting the last few on that second flying boat. Vance Fawcett (he was a wild man) was drinking someplace and he was really lit. (laughs) I had to go and get him in a taxi and drag him and get him into the plane. I thought damned if I was going to leave anybody behind. They were having too much fun.

S: One thing I've been meaning to ask you. Somewhere I had read that it is not correct to say the Halekulani.

K: That's right. Just Halekulani. It's a much more...it's more prestigious if you can carry it. Now not every place can carry it. Halekulani was able to. We used to call it Halekulani Hotel and Bungalows to describe it in the early days. Halekulani was the name that the Hawaiians suggested the Lewers family use for it, house of heaven. They appreciated the Lewers family so much because they allowed the Hawaiians to--first they gave them that little right of way between Halekulani and the Reef Hotel. The Damon family and the Lewers each gave five feet for this ten-foot right-of-way.

When it was subdivided, it was closed off. These two families instead of blocking them off from their canoes and boats and beach gave them that long ten-foot wide right-of-way. That's how simple things were in the early days. Out in front of Halekulani on the beach the canoes used to be pulled up, and the lovely big hau trees were a good place to pull the canoes up because the canoes were solid koa and out in the sun they would crack in the sun. The shade of the hau trees was much better for the canoes.

The Lewers family and the people were very good friends. That was the name, Halekulani, when Mother was a little girl. When Mother was growing up, Halekulani was Halekulani just like Arcadia was Arcadia and La Pietra was La Pietra. When Dad talked to Mr. Lewers and arranged for the lease on

Halekulani, it had been run as the Hau Tree Hotel for ten years. When we got there, Mother and Dad talked about it and Mother said that the Lewers family had always called it Halekulani. "Why don't we just call it Halekulani?" Dad said, "That's a much better idea." They just took the old Lewers name so that is the name going way back into the 1880s.

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THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Watumull Foundation Oral History Project began in June of 1971. During the following seventeen months eighty-eight people were taped. These tapes were transcribed but had not been put in final form when the project was suspended at the end of 1972.

In 1979 the project was reactivated and the long process of proofing, final typing and binding began. On the fortieth anniversary of the Watumull Foundation in 1982 the completed histories were delivered to the three repositories.

As the value of these interviews was realized, it was decided to add to the collection. In November of 1985 Alice Sinesky was engaged to interview and edit thirty-three histories that have been recorded to mark the forty-fifth anniversary of the Foundation.

The subjects for the interviews are chosen from all walks of life and are people who are part of and have contributed to the history of Hawaii.

The final transcripts, on acid-free Permalife bond paper and individually Velo-bound, are deposited and are available to scholars and historians at the Hawaii State Archives, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii and the Cooke Library at Punahou School. The tapes are sealed and are not available.

August 1987